THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR WITH OTHER POEMS

BY

HARVEY M. WATTS

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George, a fellow
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March 1917

THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR

— WITH —

OTHER POEMS

BY

HARVEY MAITLAND WATTS

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TO ———

I write; you inspire.
  Well—if merit be mine,
Whose art is the higher,
  Since beauty is thine?

Do men praise the glass
  That reflects, when the real
Is at hand to surpass
  And embody th' ideal?

I write; you inspire,
  If the taut string be mine,
And heart, 'sounding lyre,
  Well—the music is thine!

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IN THE CITY—IN THE COUNTRY

FROM AN AEROPLANE

FROM these swift planes, the earth—whose myriads creep
In insect guise below these new delights—
Reveals enacred paves in changing flights;
Glory unknown of old to storied steep,
Though from high Pharos stretched the empurpled deep
When Rome, a golden shimmer from the heights,
Vied with the memoried ivory sheen of lights
Of Athens 'neath the moon, or Corinth's sweep:—
For toiling upward man did e'er aspire
With ramp and vault to set his seal on high;
And in this newer realm the older leaven—
As when was fettered Jove's disrupting fire—
Works marvel! lo, athwart the vast of sky
Disdainful at the very gates of Heaven!

"STAINED GLASS"

(*A Winter Sunset*)

A SHIMMER of fire in the sunset lanes,
One star in the dying glow;
A glory of gold on the flashing panes,
All gem-embossed the snow.

And etched on the melting amethyst,
Swart lines of the ebon spires
On the ridge where the cedars keep their tryst,
And the north wind seldom tires.

A rising arc on the eastern marge,
Deep blue in a hectic flush,
The dusky trail of the earth's vast targe;
Sudden the evening hush.

A final gleam in the dulling west,
One gleam, and the night's broad pall,
Silver enwrought, flings free—Then rest:
The dark is over all.

"FOR SALE—FACTORY SITES"

(On the City's Edge)

'TWAS here the anemone heard the call of Spring,
The brook ran limpid and the fields, a-flower
With gold and purple at the year's last hour,
Were strewn as if for fairy welcoming.
But now the reaches with harsh noises ring
Of grinding wheels where whispering aspens grew,
And, where their spires of green once cut the blue,
Tall chimneys belch with sudden flame and fling
Their smoky banners, while the brook's scant bed
Shudders from searing touch of slag-lined lea;
For lo, the woods and wilds are gone fore'er—
Yet hold regret! Youth's Dryad dream is dead,

But all these throbbing steam-torn notes declare
Dominion! earth and its deeps in human fee!

IN MARCH

THE rushing waters fill the brook,
The sap is in the tree,
The Whitlow-grass in sunny nook,
Looks up at you and me!

The frosty frown of winter's gone,
The earth's in melting mood.
Shall we untouched remain alone
In self's chill servitude?

No, no; like birdlings in the dell,
Gleeful in springtide bout,
Each with his mate, since all is well,
We'll join the merry rout!

AURORA URBIS

'TIS not the elemental fitful gleam
That gives a beacon to the ice-bound night,
In drifting splendor at supernal height,
Aloof from earth and man; ah no, this beam
That tints the tell-tale clouds reveals the stream
Of life, hot-blooded in the pent-up streets,
Whose many-starred Shekinah boldly greets
The dark with radiant contempt. We dream
Of other days; of marvels, wonders, wrought
Since man, freed from the beast that bound, first fared
A-field, and rock gushed metal at the call
Of Tubal Cain. But all the Past e'er dared
Before this glowing miracle is naught:
Force serves, and Art enthroned is over all.

CAPE ANN

(*Grapevine Cove—East Gloucester*)

THE scent of roses o'er the down,
The cool breath of the sea,
Green paths where granite masses frown
In gray severity.

The waves, reluctant, scarcely seem
To beat upon the shore,
But, languid as a summer dream,
Babble of Nereid lore.

One reach of blue the morning sky,
The eve all opaline,
Save where the half-moon rides on high
And trails a silvern sheen.

The thrush is in the apple-tree,
The lanes re-echo song,
The bell-buoy's mournful minstrelsy
The drifting winds prolong.

Here, far away from din of town,
Is sweet serenity,
With scent of roses o'er the down,
And cool breath of the sea.

NIGHT PIECE

(Boston from Blue Hill)

FROM this roof tower all fairyland in sight!
Toy constellations spilled among the trees,
Revealed, snuffed out by whimsies of the breeze,
Soft glint and gleam of distant city light!
Lo! there, by magic of mechanic might,
Dark imitates the wont of garish day,
Blots out the stars, and of its kindly ray
Bereaves the moon, defying fall of night.
But here the olden glory reigns supreme;
Above the dead horizon, living sky!
And, as in awe its massy drift we scan,—
A circling maze of myriad suns astream,
Whose black abysses mark immensity—
How small yon mole hill seems, how petty man!

IN APRIL

THE maple with its coral spray,
Splashes the woodland edge;
The line of unawakened gray
Is washed by the greening sedge.

The soft clouds drag the topmost hill,
The slope is flower be-sprent,
With life and love astir—what ill?
Look up and be content!

THE EQUINOX

(*Spring in the City*)

THE desert streets knew naught of living green
Though buds were bursting on the upland slope.
Of Spring the dusty reach gave little hope,
Nor walls unending, gray and grim of mien;
But lo, the imperious sun of yestere'en
With equinoctial splendor smote the air
Whilst highways golden paved, and windows, rare
With jacinth hues aflame, transformed the scene,
And crimson glory limned the embattled west
As burning fervor spread where erst the thrall
Of commonplace held ways and men. A sign

Of souls inspired, who once the mean
possessed,
Yet, caught the ray of Love's deep fire,
recall
Life's halcyon days, reflect a light divine.

IN MAY

A NODDING smile, at every turn,
Hardest of hearts unlocks
Where croziered fronds of silvery fern
Shepherd the violet flocks;
And mid-air dogwood drifts of snow
Repeat the bluets' spread below.

At dusk, the lacery of green,
Curtains the glowing west,
As lonely thrushes sing and preen
Upon the poplar's crest;
And scented winds go sweeping by
Whisp'ring a summer lullaby.

Sudden the change since all was bare,
Seared with the winter's strife;
Oh, that my quickened soul might share
This swift rebound of life;
Exult with joyous things of day
As skies and woods proclaim the May!

TO A BUTTERFLY IN THE CITY

ADOWN the blistering lanes of sculptured stone,
Whose towering fronts mark out the Midas bowers,
Through sun-baked highways in the noontide hours,
O'er glare of pave where jostling thousands groan
For silent stretch of woodland shade, alone,
Or quietude of nook where brooklets sing,
Thou flutterest, beauteous, on inconstant wing,
Whilst commerce rales in hoarse, unchanging drone.
O, lost on Trade's uncouth, far-reaching strand—
That knows not banks a-flower, nor ripened bough,
Nor wind-blown reach where all is fair and free—

Bright symbol of the poet's thoughts art
thou,
Bearing to men engrossed in merchantry
Enchanting hint of far Arcadian land.

IN JUNE

SOFT incense from the resined yews,
The sun, entangled in the grass,
With touch of passion hope renews;
Desires will come to pass!

The rose and grape, in happy strife,
Yield odors, rare, beyond all art;
'Tis "open sesame" for life,
And joy is at the heart!

THE GATEWAY

AFTER THE BATHS OF ROME

(*The Pennsylvania Railroad Station, New York*)

WHAT Rome in sheer abandonment of pride
Flung free on high for Purple Ease a lair,
Fretted with gold, a-gleam with spoils most rare,
Here, to a nobler use soars purified.
While from its silent depths controlled glide
The slaving monsters as the people fare—
Of all things past the free, resplendent heir—
Holding the earth in leash with naught untried.
Lo, 'neath these vaultings how oblivion sweeps
The older portals! What the Golden Horn?
Or Venice, dreaming where soft waters swoon?

Or Atlas towering o'er gray ocean's deep?
Here, where this titan gateway greets the morn
Glad millions press to life's exultant noon!

IN JULY

THE sun streams through a yellow haze,
The topmost trees are still,
The bank, with drooping phlox ablaze,
Quivers beneath his will!

The straw glows in the mow-heaped pyre,
The pebbled spring runs dry,
The far horizon's white with fire;
Blue flame the very sky!

Cloudless the unrelenting day
Burns to the set of sun;
And night, fierce-passioned, holds its sway
After one's work is done!

NIGHT PIECE

(*Summer in the City*)

THE stupid canopy of heaven hangs low
Thick with the city's murk. Above the pave
The Babel towers lift a narrowed nave,
Whilst, deep embowelled, furnace openings glow
On steaming forms, as stifling currents flow
In reeking lair, the modern dragon cave!
For, mastering all but fate, man dare not save
Himself the burden, nor the arm the blow.
Goaded, he struggles in the sweaty hope
That nature cowed, new heights attained, come peace
And softer outlook o'er some nobler scene.
Ah, God, with baser things we more than cope,
Yet, world in hand, toil on without surcease,
To lose, in gaining all, the life serene!

REVERIE

(*August on Conanicut*)

THE scented heath breaks rock-riven to the shore,
The sea is still;
The drowsy winds drift through the vine-clad door,
And have their will
Of downs a-flower and beach with tide-loot strewn,
Whilst all the mist-touched coves where waters droon
Quiver to dreamland under the August moon;
A witching dreamland under the August moon,
The August moon!

Across the filmy path of light-tipped waves
My fancy flies
To silvern distance where the spirit craves
Some glad surprise,

And, of the hidden, asks but one sweet
boon—
Love in lone life, as night winds croon
And seas are magic under the August moon;
All molten magic under the August moon,
The August moon!

IN AUGUST

BY graveled roadside at the edge
The creeping vine's white trumpets blare,
Signaling across to tawny ledge
Where orange milkweed blossoms flare.

And, near the wood where reeds are lush,
The roseate mallows riot free,
Where regal lilies in the hush
Of melting noons droop gracefully.

At eve the insect myriads fill
The fruiting fields with strident lay,
And sultry night hours loudly shrill
With echoes of the vocal day.

STREET PICTURE

(*The Reverie of the Blind*)

NO break of dawn with roseate hue
Foretells the day to ravished eyes;
Nor does the glowing noon review
The flight of time, nor even's skies
When all the street is color strown.
Ah no, in one gray monotone
The hours waste. I wait, alone.
All day long here—A coin in cup?—you hear my cry.
For life to me is but the rush and rustle of the passers by.

No doubt Madonna faces cheer,
As tributes paid to wretchedness,
Or painted Vice gives sidelong leer,
Full mindful of the world's harsh stress.
While Wealth, encoached, in noisy show
Goes whirling by, the poor, who know
The brotherhood of common woe,

Drop in their mite,—May God be kind!—
as loud I cry.
For life to me is but the rush and rustle of
the passers by.

At times the shouts of crowding throng
Proclaim some spectacle of state.
Forgotten, while exult the strong,
I catch the undertone of fate:
Men come, men go, the mob's the same
The plaudits go to place and name,
And tramp of thousands echoes fame.
To-day they press, to-morrow, curse—Ah,
hear my cry!
For life to me is but the rush and rustle of
the passers by.

MARIGOLDS IN NOVEMBER

YELLOW filched from gorgeous noons,
Orange of the setting sun,
Here a splash of warm maroons
Seen before the night's begun:
Though the air is bleak and cold
You are laughing, marigold.

Frost has touched the Summer blooms,
Blight has marked them for its own;
But, dispeller of earth's glooms
You, unconquered, sport alone:
Though the air is bleak and cold
You are happy, marigold.

Ah! when gay the morn and eve
Sunshine was your only store;
Now, although the breezes grieve,
Cheer they find about the door
Where you, beaming in the cold,
Nestle happy, marigold.

So perhaps, one's duties done
  In the noon of busy life,
Give their meed as seasons run
  Into chiller days of strife;
Burst in cheer as hearts grow cold,
As you, happy marigold.

AT CLOSE OF DAY

(*In the City*)

TOIL-FREE the workers haste on weary feet,
And all is motion
As level sunlight trails along the street.
Life's restless ocean
Frets its tired surges as the sixth hour peals,
Then over all the twilight steals,
The twilight steals!

The rush from out the busy marts is done;
Ebb tide, swift flowing;
The windowed cliffs reflect the ruddy sun;
Sky, jewelled, glowing
The ragged line of distant roof conceals,
Then over all the twilight steals,
The twilight steals!

Gloom, ashen, follows on the dying fire,
All light is failing;

Horizon girt, the towers of cloudy Tyre
  Are zenith scaling.
Night's signet the Orient region feels,
Then over all the twilight steals,
The twilight steals!

THE REPLY OF GIGADIBS

THE REPLY OF GIGADIBS

(A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE)

(*Being the Reverse to the Obverse of Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology"*)

AND so it fell that Blougram eased his mind
To Gigadibs, the literary man,
And, though the night had waned and gibbous moon
Did peek and peer the banquet chamber in,
Yet still the talk went on; for Gigadibs
Who sat there silent, eye intent on cloth,
Arranging olive stones in rhythmic piles,
Had otherwise been utilizing mind,
And seeming perfect type of listener
Yet kept his head as Bishop ambled on
So nimbly in his vain-blown argument.
Then came the smile contemptuous and it drew
The corners of the mouth and held the lips
Enchained, until the torrent of conceit
Had run its rushing course; and, satisfied

With all the world, with self the most of all
The Bishop ceased, and, patronizingly,
To Gigadibs, as patron in the past
Was wont to nod to poet at his gate
Whose very presence there insured the fame
Of that same gilded worldling, Lethe-loved,
He nodded. Then with sweep of hand the pile
Of olive stones was swept from snowy board
And Gigadibs aroused thus made reply.

WELL, Blougram, be it so; yet you confess
In vino veritas, your rule in life.
Nor fear, that is the gist, though I proclaim
And spread your baseness from the very roof,
And say in sooth, this Blougram is a fool
A canting, lying—eh, what not a fool?
You choke at that? You're much too clever, eh?
Would feel the bald insinuation less
Should you be damned by somewhat graver charge?

So then let's at it, where I stopped the flow,
That wondrous flow of eloquence, your gift,
By which you 'witch us all, make black look white
By turning tropes and false analogies.
You, in the converse touching on my work
And your conception of theology,
Did show, clean cut, a very hypocrite.
Hold now! The word is ugly, I admit,
But robbed of fine distinctions there you stand,
As painted by yourself in coarse, black line,
Arch hypocrite and what an adept too!
Enhoused in church you use it for your ease;
(Let sacrifices fall on other souls
For why do penance where so many kneel?)
And if your dogmas are but half the truth,
Secure of earth, you're sure of heaven too;
For lo, so famed a prelate's not o'erlooked
When faithful lift their orisons on high
And dead or living you will get your due;
At most your tomb may make an altar rail.
Position and preferments, these you love;
The flesh pots of an Egypt, greener far,

More fruitful too than ever Moses knew,
And more unfailing, since the rich supplies
Are endless where the zealot instinct rules.
Ah, flesh with you is mighty, spirit weak.
But why should flesh, since all too soon the goal,
Not have its own full swing, its little day,
And take its chances in the aftermath?
And what the aftermath, do any know?
And what and where the bourne whence none return,
Not e'en the Schoolmen solved, and so, to-day,
The only creed that claims authority,
That is, through fact not Apostolic faith,
And fetches witnesses from t'other shore
Is Spiritism; but the Heaven it shows
Through medium hid in darkened cabinet
And evidence of the too, too certain shapes,
That throng in sleezy tulle or mull well worn
Or other soft material purchased clean

But now as soiled as seem the astral shapes,
Is tawdry, crass and crude and worse than earth.
If Hades show no better we are curst.
Some such complacent view has filled your soul,
And, fatuous, you feel impregnable
And, lording over all, so neatly wool
The eyes of those who form the plastic mob
That plaudits greet your every step. Secure?
Yet there's a text,—You have it well in mind,
Since 'twas the best of last year's Lenten course,
In Proverbs, chapter ten and six, quite brief,
"Superba et praecedit," thus it runs,
"Contritionem! ante ruinam"
Of course then "exaltatur spiritus"*
As far as rusty Latin memory goes.
This Englished in our current phrase would be,

* "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—*Proverbs* xvi. 18.

Pride goeth but before a certain fall,
And haughtiness treads but the road to ruin.
In golden letters it should be displayed,
Vermilioned capitals in missal style,
Above your seat and for your eyes alone.

BUT, let us to the theme we started on.
You brought me here to state your naked thought.
The mood's contagious, frankness suits me well.
For you declass my comrades and myself
And damn the whole profession in a name.
You say in fine, that Gigadibs, that's I,
Is in your estimation but a worm.
And yet a worm has value. Darwin proved
Its uses in a patient monograph
And proved in other work, his monument,
A state of things that needs must give you pain;
Since not the best but fittest do survive.
And in an age of sham and stucco faith
When lip belief, not life, receives applause
'Tis such as you do grace the topmost seats

That rest on rotten piles, too soon to fall.
But in an age whose sun but lately rose
In dim horizon murk, yet clear the burst
When zenith splendor shall irradiate,
You'll play th' ignoble part your soul demands.
You look on me as some zoologist
Regards the organs of abortive type,
Concedes the curious functions but denies
The general value of specific form.
And so it comes to this, that you advise
The steerage, and a miner's traveling kit.
And yet, you claim discernment is your forte
And, just, your value of modernity.
You're pampered, and your metal rings not true.
Have you not learned from friendly oculist
That e'en the perfect eye has blinded spot?
So in your mind, most perfect of its kind
(A trained machine the which I must admire)
One deadened spot exists, reaction fails,
Which you have turned, I judge but by results,

Upon the press yet fail to see its worth!
Just as the haughty lords of other days
Saw nothing in the magnet but a toy,
Till commerce hung upon its feeble power
And continents were at the needle's point.
But granted that, what else? It held up nails,
Or, big enough, a weighty mass of iron.
But in the blackened edge a mighty force
Lay hid, now quickened into dynamo.
So type in hand is scarcely more than lead,
And e'en one printed page is innocent;
But whirl in form in fast revolving mass,
E'en as the armature is swiftly sent,
And then the potent energy appears
And takes its place as wonder of the world.
And yet this force, and here I state my case,
Appears distorted in your complex brain.
Your aura but obscures the clearer view,
Just as the photosphere, though in itself
A glowing mass, yet lines the spectrum black.
'Tis medievalism clouds your intellect.
You dream of that dark time, and think it now,

When bishops fleeced the barons; popes, the kings,
And printers' devils had not yet appeared.
For others, exorcism stood at hand.
('Tis practiced even now upon the sly)
So therefore from your lofty state to-day
The daily journal seems a trifle small
And he who's part of it the merest speck.
So some have thought before and come to grief
Whose mien was haughtier far than Blougram's port.

WELL, is the press so weak? Come, test its strength,
And find how Blougram overrates himself.
You've set it forth,—if I should play you false,
Write down the frank confession as you spoke
And print it word for word, none would believe;
Not e'en your enemy. And such your boast!

Ha! ha! why this would make a dullard smile,
And e'en the street boy could enlighten you.
Pray where has been your hidden diocese?
And where encloistered have you spent your days?
Such might have been the case, perhaps, you know,
These many, many years ago, when, true,
The week-old news and maiden verses filled
The narrow columns and the type and ink
Were on a par with what they badly blurred.
The present's not the past, we've changed all that;
In vanguard of this age's storm and stress
The very head and front of its advance,
The modern journal moves upon its way.
A Juggernaut, perhaps, some dub it so,
But I amend, and make it Car of Light,
Beneath whose wheels the error and the fraud,
Corruption high and low, and crime and vice
Are crushed, and all the hydra heads
That spawning ignorance puts freely forth.

Proved in the proving, tribune of the few
And voice of many, think you it is weak?
That all who know its value feel distrust?
The wish in you befathers erring thought.
Not disbelief, but trust has gained the day.
Too many rogues have here been brought
to book,
Too many dragged from state they did
abuse.
All needs be done is set the facts in line
And paint the swindler simply as he is.
Where accuracy has slain its tens on tens
And hundreds fall by deadly parallel,
To be misquoted is to keep your fame
And what you are not often wins the day,
While what you are, if printed, crushing
ruin.
Lo, confidence has brought its train of ills,
And e'en the false finds many credulous.
What, disbelieve? Oh, no; belief's the
word.
(I'm sure your orthodoxy moves at that)
And yet you, in your pride, despise all this
And call it weakling force. It has its lacks;
Its brooding Buddhas wear no striking robe

Nor sweep in august state up chancel aisle,
And title's lost in anonymity,
And reputation hides itself in deeds.
Here is an altruism yet unmatched
By you or yours, although the daily boast
Of abnegation is your stock in trade.
For every martyr e'en has fame to spare,
And ostentation is the very life
Of Church, you know, as well as world at large.
Lo, craze of name is epidemic now
And heads are turned to notoriety.
E'en pilloried in crime has its rewards
For those to whom to live and be unseen
Is worse than death. This other worldliness
Of those who do their duty, but must stand
As X, unknown, in algebraic sum
In forming the equation of success,
Is truest sacrifice and self denial.
And yet you talk as if 'twas cheap and mean
And miss the whole while quibbling over part.
Ignore its signal worth and do forget
That tyrants, those enthroned, or those the mass

Have set on high as demagogic boss
Do tremble as they hear the mighty throb.
Lo, roar of press has silenced cannonade,
And "latest news" outwits the diplomats.
Yea, smell of ink has made autocracy
Grow faint where bombs were ineffectual.
There's more of freedom, that they know
full well,
Where lives the press untrammeled than all
laws
Or special grants provide, where right divine
Oft rules as if from nether world had come
Its charter, title, to its rule of wrong.
E'en there the press enmartyred grows apace
And all the censors fail to blank it out.
It knows no bounds on land or heaving main
To check the progress of its enterprise,
And, more than argus-eyed and million-
tongued,
Proclaims the doings of the rough-rimmed
world.
And though you boast of heaped up treasury
It soon would drain if one day's cost you
paid.
For penny a line has long been out of date,

And single words have cost far more, in fact,
Than you have paid for ostensorium,
Although a ruby glow amid the gold.
And e'en your fattest check, or signet ring,
Though at its beck a treasury unlocks,
Would hardly pay the telegraphic bills.

BUT, come, suppose I take your gauntlet up
And print your chatter, Blougram, word for word.
Well then 'tis done. Th' edition's on the street;
Some hundred thousand copies at the least.
You preach to seven hundred, do you not?
Ah, yes, but doubled on a gala day.
And then your printed slip in diocese,
If all goes well, still spreads you further on,
But at the most ten thousand is your all,
(You see I even give the "devil" his due)
To whom you stand as paragon indeed.
But hundred times that number read the news,
And hundred-fold repeat it everywhere.

And when 'tis sent the country o'er, exchanged
And re-exchanged, why thousand-fold it flies,
Till millions read and other millions tell.
E'en backwoods towns, and cross-roads villages
Affect the news of the metropolis.
And fame means fame when so 'tis spread abroad;
When what is done in Zealand's praised in Maine,
And Tangier chieftain dies in bulging print
An inch in size in some Dakotan town.
Since this is true the corollary stings;
Disgrace is deep, remorse a scorpion's nest,
And no retreat is found for broken life.
For if there be some hidden nook, mayhap,
Where telegraph's unknown and intercourse
In native tongue is yet by word of mouth,
In some far distant island settlement,
Your ship would hardly reach the port
Ere from the hold the month-old journals rise

(For Nemesis assumes this modern form)
And tell the story to antipodes.
Perchance your portrait too would lead the page,
And thus a wretched wanderer, you'd find,
In partibus, yes, infidelium
The dark suspicion where you sought surcease.
But let us start th' apology on its way:
First head-lines set you out in bold-faced type.
These point the way to richness yet to come;
You'll not despise them when the ordeal's o'er
And Blougram, humbled, cries "Ha' mercy all"
For thus pinked out I see the exposé
Somewhat as follows:

BLOUGRAM TELLS IT ALL.

The Bishop's Method Clear—He Dupes His Flock—His Views as Seen o'er Cordials and the Cheese—Pure Piety Discounted—Other Ways Succeed—Would Rather Wine and Dine than Save a Soul, If it

Would Interfere with Flow of Wit—The Reason Why He Lingers in the Pale—The Pickings Fatter There and Kine Less Lean.

I hear the boys out shrieking on the streets.
Your fame is bruited on the every breeze,
"Here now the morning papers!! Blougram talks!!!
"The great sensation!!!! Here you are, a cent."
And then the comment. Those who knew you best.
"We knew he was a rogue"—"He flew too high"—
"At least he told the truth for once in life"—
"Old Blougram overreached himself that's sure"—
"The Church is blessed, he fooled it long enough"—
"These after dinner talkers kill themselves—
Their very glibness cuts the edge of sense"—
"Not what he said, his cry? Oh that's played out,

"So X, the boodler, claimed." And so the talk
Would run in widening circle, and, the world
At large, to whom you'd be but shadowy name,
Yet thick enough, like string in potash jar
To which the crystals all attach themselves,
About your simulacrum would collect
A hundred anecdotes and wondrous tales.
Believe the publication? Why of course!
They'd set it down for more than gospel truth.
And I'm convinced, for facts run all one way,
Although a pure specific is a dream
Of science, and not likely in our time
(Save in the advertisements, paid in full)
The best specific for the cure of pride,
Though drastic, is a wholesome dose of print.
Oh, I have seen most stubborn cases yield!
And once will do, no failure mars the plan,
Though testimonials rarely are produced.
No fault in the medicament, howe'er;
Oh no, 'tis merely human modesty
And reticence, twin virtues as you know,
By hearsay, not experience of your own.

And, if I should administer the dose,
Although unwilling you'd admit the truth,
When, sans complacency, you'd wish your words
Were anywhere but down in black and white.
Then you, not I, would take the friendly pick
And seek the pier, the ship and newer land.

WHAT was I saying? Oh; of course, in jest!
There's naught so sacred as a confidence.
We all are weak at times, the best of us,
And wear our hearts out freely on our sleeves,
Exhibit inmost thoughts, which proves, I think,
How much the world is kind as well as kin.
Your frankness really honors you. These walls
Alone shall know our converse here to-night.
The secret's sooner told by them than me.
Though hearing much as your confessional,
The daily journal prints but half it knows,

And holds the other half as guarantee
Of good behavior. Ah, you're not alone
In this predicament. The company
Is large and goodly; yea, enjoys life too;—
As much as those who till a crater's edge.
You say you preach next Sunday? What's
the theme?
On "Honor?" Good! I'll see somebody's
there,
(It's well to throw a sop to Cerberus)
Who'll give your rich discourse its fullest
meed.
What almost break of day? I must be off!

SONGS AND SONNETS

TO AN AMERICAN BEAUTY

LOVELY in bud. Ah, who beholding
The beauty of its petal claspéd form
Can marvel that, unfolding,
The full blown flower takes all the world by storm.
Fragrance, whose balm a New-World sweetness
Exhales upon the brisk, pulse-quickening air,
A sense of rich completeness
Its vigors with its subtler graces share.

Then hasten, Rose! ere yet the morning
Of thy brief glory passeth all too soon,
Full fit for her adorning
Who at the threshold faces life's high noon.
Queenly in poise, no Old-World clamor
Of precedence, nor accidents of birth,
Nor title's empty glamor
Her charms enhance—Go, Rose, and share her worth!

FOR ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

UNTOUCHED, I laughed at love at sudden sight,
Deeming it figment of a puppet art,
Machine-made god to fit machine-made part,
And dulled to finer things, denied the light;
But since thy face has dawned upon my night,
Radiant, I seize upon the poignant dart,
Ecstatic, press it deeper in my heart;
Welcome its pain, yield gladly to its might!
Like Paul of Tarsus, now no longer blind,
No longer deaf to voices from on high,
That thrill the ear as thrush at eventide,
A quickened faith and hope in thee I find,
A newer creed to cry exultingly,
Thy self my all, my gospel glorified!

FOR THE SPRINGTIME

OH, would thou wert a violet,
And I the clasping leaf
Heart-folded, chalicing thy life,
Thy beauty all my fief!—
A vain conceit? Mayhap! And yet
I would thou wert a violet
And I—the leaf.

Oh, would thou wert a violet,
And I the sunny nook
Pervaded by thy perfumed grace,
Thy love an open book.
An idle thought? Mayhap! And yet
I would thou wert a violet
And I—the nook.

Oh, would thou wert a violet,
And I the lingering breeze
That stooped to kiss thy loveliness
Under the burgeoning trees.
A spring-tide dream? Mayhap! And yet
I would thou wert a violet
And I—the breeze.

COMMUNION

WHEN every look is tell-tale with desire,
What if bold words be wanting? Speech is naught,
And the long silence with love's meaning fraught
Quickens the cheek and eye with deeper fire;
Whilst subtler essences of self conspire
To stir the depths, outrun the very thought,
As each to each, through wizardry unsought,
Surely responds as strings in double lyre.
And yet this mystery, too oft, in strife
Is lost; and we, in crush of thing intense
O'erwhelmed—the very way by flash concealed—
See not, full-blinded by the glare of life,
That in the twilight of the duller sense
Lo! soul to soul, in beauty stands revealed.

EVENSONG

SOFTLY, at eve, let thy swift fingers sweeping
O'er the dim keys, from whence the music wells,
Give me delight, a joy akin to weeping,
As the low plaint its tonal anguish tells
Of heart-strings touched, of song too dear for singing
Heard as the candles gleam, the dusk thee closer bringing,
Softly, at eve!

Softly at eve, should we be haply straying,
'Mid memoried walks where cypress shadows fall,
Hearing the splash of fountains idly playing,
May we that golden time of old recall,
And both enraptured, every moment sating,
List to the Thrush's note in fervid, springtime mating,
Softly, at eve!

Softly, at eve, when words seem mere intrusion,
May my hand-clasp suffice for murmured vow,
And eye meet eye, with cheek in rich suffusion,
As, side by side, at hidden shrine we bow;
Love, let me say, 'twill be no crass transgression
To thee, as antiphon, oh then, my last confession,
Softly, at eve!

UNAWARES

AH, unawares, we angels entertain:
In humble flesh they clothe the spark divine,
And, blind, we heed in naught the simple sign
That tells the birthright; scarce indeed refrain
From harsh unwelcome of the rack and chain.
For so the world distorts us to its will
That, unattuned, we miss the wondrous thrill
And flout the weak, the strong's coarse smile to gain.
And then too late, the past beyond recall
When time's revenges come with turning sand,
The sure reproach, the wormwood, bitter gall!
And yet, what heart reward to those who gave
The cup, the crust, the cloak, the ready hand
And knew, in giving, joy that seraphs crave!

AT THE RECITAL

(*Stanzas with a Foreign Refrain*)

THAT note! it thrills me through and through!
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
Once more the poignant strain begin!
Piercing my breast—Meine Ruh' ist hin—
And then, as if in echoing call,
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
Let consolation softly fall
As benison while hopes renew—
Du bist die Ruh'!

So swings life's pendulum, e'er true—
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
If self be lost, we haply win,
Yet victor, cry. "Meine Ruh' ist hin!"
Oh, sick at heart, perplexed, full blind,
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
Restless, what peace at last to find,
What calm of heights amid the blue—
Du bist die Ruh'!

Welcome distress, for that I sue!
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
Compassion! Ah, to love akin,
Turns all to joy—Meine Ruh' ist hin—
Oh, then, as major harmonies roll,
(Meine Ruh' ist hin—Du bist die Ruh'!)
Let the sweet cadence 'whelm the soul
Fragrant with memories all too few,—
Du bist die Ruh'!

FASCINATION

WHAT is this charm that thy least actions throw
O'er all the simplest things? What is this grace
Shown in the very touch, the very pace?
Others more beauty have possessed I know,
The Cyprian crew perpetually on show
All sleek and golden in the market place;
And dim, as dusty tomes the records trace,
The pedant virtues of Hypatias glow!
But these have naught in common, nor are part
Of thee, since imaged thou, thy sex above,
And fixed forever in my quickened heart
As one whose ways reveal that law of love
That shares, as shrined Madonna, calm and mild,
Th' eternal mother with the soul of child.

TOO LATE

(*Presto Agitato—ben Marcato*)

HURRY on! Hurry on!
Precious must be the load,
Hurry on! Hurry on!
Horse a-blood from the goad,
Fierce the rush down the road.
Hurry on! Hurry on!
Loud, loud, the herald cries,
Open gate! Open gate!
Life yields to hate's reprise,
Too late—the arrow flies.
Too late! Too late!

Click it on! Click it on!
Lightning-swift o'er the sea.
Click it on! Click it on!
Words of heart agony.
"Love, love, come back to me."
Click it on! Click it on!
"Come, could you not divine?"

Break the news! Break the news!
"I am entirely thine."
Too late—no answering sign.
Too late! Too late!

Oh, the knell! Oh, the knell!
Too late we lay our plan.
Oh, the knell! Oh, the knell!
Cunning, with wit of man,
But small the arc we scan,
Oh, the knell! Oh, the knell!
Fate runs the circle 'round,
Toll the bell! Toll the bell!
Low lies the simple mound.
Too late—Heart-rending wound!
Too late! Too late!

AD UNAM

I WOULD, but dare not touch you lest you know
The wild delirium a-rage within.
And yet—because of fear of earth-born sin—
Why should I halt me; why this bliss forego?
How can the impassioned touch of love defile
The very temple it would consecrate?
Since in heart-alchemy is sublimate
All baser mood; until the low, the vile,
Transfused, transformed, as in refining fires,
With dross of self, become full purified
In mutual sacrifice. Eternal test
Of this, the new communion which aspires
To super-heights too long undared, untried,
As love attains its solace, ends its quest.

TO ÆOLUS

(A SONG OF SEASONS)

(*Winter*)

UNDER bare poles the forest bends
beneath the hurtling blast,
And the pine tree dreams of the wild
sea days to come to its tapering
mast;
And the hemlocks on their rocky ledge give
voice to a winter song,
And the snow falls fast with a stinging dash
And the birches creak and the oak-boughs
clash
As the north wind hastens along, along,
As the north wind hastens along.

(*Spring*)

Under the sun the forest smiles and cheer
is everywhere,
And the tasseled alders shake in glee for
Spring is in the air;

And the gentle poplars on the slope are
a-twitter with joyous song,
Whilst blood-root blooms replace the snows,
And arbutus buds forestall the rose
As the south wind hastens along, along,
As the south wind hastens along.

(*Summer*)

Under a dome of lustrous blue the peace
of the earth is thine,
As the cedarn sentries watch the fields in a
steady, stately line;
And the orchard thrush and the oriole vie
together in melting song,
And the wild grape scents the leafy lane,
And the mimic waves sweep the growing
grain
As the west wind hastens along, along,
As the west wind hastens along.

(*Autumn*)

Under the veil of dragging clouds the hilly
crest is lost;

In the mad, mad rush of the gale at sea the
ships are tempest tost;
And the brook bank-full goes rushing by
as it sings its noisy song,
And the thirsty fields forget their drought,
And the rain-sick moon comes peeping out
As the east wind hastens along, along,
As the east wind hastens along.

UNIDENTIFIED

(Suggested by the Unknown Graves on the Ocean Drive at Newport)

AT rest, asleep, where breaks the sobbing sea,
Whose waves on hollow reefs make constant moan,
As if in plaint and prayer for these alone
Asking repose through endless monody,
These twain lie nameless. Yea, no carven plea,
In grudged remembrance, stares in massy stone
To cheat Time of its rightful spoil. Unknown,
They, silent, speak but of humanity.
And as, midst merriment of ancient feast,
The death-head warned the heedless of the grave,
So, here, where painted beauty sweeps in pride,

These mounds forecast, in face of wealth
unleashed,
The fate of these—nor gems nor gold can
save—
Doomed, all, to moulder "Unidentified!"

IN AFTER YEARS

AH, was it not but yesterday
We two, love, you and I,
Were all in all? The envious say
The years have hastened by;
But not so, love! It cannot be;
I know no flight of time
Whose favors are inconstancy
And life's dull pantomime.
All is unchanged. Come, give me joy,
Though morning breaks in gray;
Can one drear night our love destroy
That blossomed—yesterday?

Ah, was it not but yesterday?
In memory's magic glass
The deeds of years in brave array
In august pageant pass.
A Circe web is woven wide,
As mind's fast shuttles fly,
And dreamland actions swiftly glide
Just in the blink of eye.
Success, defeats, and all their train
Of joys and woes—Nay! Nay!

The fleeting vision gives no pain,
When 'twas but yesterday.

Forgot is time, forgot is age;
A plague on memory!
Truth oft is hidden in its page,
A palimpsest decree.
For was it not but yesterday
We two, together, here?
Love is not dead, and life is gay,—
We weep beside no bier.
Poor, sordid souls reproach the hour
That wings its rapid way;
Dear Heart, they know not love's sweet power,—
It was but yesterday.

AT HARVARD—THE "YARD" IN SUMMER

(*Majoresque Cadunt "Altis ab Ulmis" Umbrae*)

THE longer shadows stretch across the grass,
Elm-woven traceries across the wall,
The bustling, eager world is near, at call.
And yet—but o'er this simple threshold pass
And all is changed. Forgot the crude and crass
Appeals; the Present with its mart and stall.
Deserted, say you? Yet how thronged the mall
As reverie fares free where none harass!
For lo! before these fronts, severe in line,
Before this foot-worn reach of spreading yard,
A deeper touch than nature gives is thine,
A deeper thrill than beauty of the glen
Imparts, or glory of the sea, unmarred;
A poignant sense of comradeship, of men.

FOR THE WINTER TIME

THE wood's thin spires cut the western sky,
Red, dull-red glows the day-done fire;
And the hemlock branches swish and sigh
As the starry herds fill the night's vast byre,
And the winds, near-lulled, touch the reeds and die
Like the last fond note on a trembling lyre—
The last fond note on a trembling lyre.

Outside rules the chill; in this nook, apart,
All ember-lit, let us rest, content;
Ah, love, since I know how dear thou art
Let me press thee, sweet, for that sure consent.
And oh, that the promptings of thy heart
I might seal with the kiss of acknowledgment—
The long, long kiss of acknowledgment.

THE MEMORY OF THE GREAT

THE great are gone; the world, its grief expressed,
Moves as before; the bustling marts resume,
Men turn to merriment, forget the gloom,
And those in whom authority is dressed
Crowd to the van; and, eager, many fume
To ope new ways, or quenchéd fires relume,
And past is lost in newer, present quest—
This is the surface seeming, but not so!
All, all is changed down to the deeps of life;
Though masked and hidden, as the years go by,
Lo, silently the subtle forces flow,
And, working marvels in the later strife,
Proclaim the due to name none may deny!

FOR THE DEDICATION OF A HALL OF SCIENCE

GREAT God of nature, let these halls,
The hidden things of earth make plain;
Let knowledge trumpet forth her calls,
And wisdom speak, but not in vain.

Help us to read with humble mind,
Thy larger scriptures, day by day—
True bread of life! O be thou kind,
If, erring, we should go astray.

For deep resounding unto deep,
Declares the wonders of thy plan;
Life struggling from its crystal sleep
Finds glorious goal at last in man.

The mysteries of the eternal laws
Are but the shadows of thy might.
God, ruling all in final cause,
Enshrine the world in love and light!

TO A ROADSIDE CEDAR

'TIS not for thee in ancient walks to throw
Thy pointed shadows o'er the sculptured stone,
Where marbles fix some Niobean moan
Of art; nor, gathering gloom where waters flow
Past groves Lethean, aisled with mortal woe,
To lift thy cheering spires. Thy lot is strown
In newer, happier climes and lands unknown
To classic realms of storied feasts and show.
For thou, dear gnomon of the passing hour,
Green sentinel of sunny lanes and fields,
Whose sturdy watch defies harsh winter's knell,
Art guardian of the humblest homes, where dwell
The simple folk, the yeomanry that wields
In peopled might all that men crave of power!

REVELATION

I TASTE the dragon blood of Spring,
The mystery of the woods is mine!
I know whereof the bluebirds sing
And why the South wind, whispering,
Brings Heaven to Earth, as hearts incline
Responsive to the awakening sign.—
I taste the dragon blood of Spring
The mystery of the woods is mine!

I taste the dragon blood of youth,
The mystery of the heart's unsealed!
Desire in check, lest without ruth
It crush in fleshly grasp the truth
That love is more than lust; revealed
The inner light so long concealed.—
I taste the dragon blood of youth,
The mystery of the heart's unsealed!

I taste the dragon blood of life,
The mystery of the soul is clear!
Though with dispute the air is rife
Though lost in moil of wordy strife

The harmony of the eternal sphere
Rings true, and God is far and near.—
I taste the dragon blood of life,
The mystery of the soul is clear!

FRIENDSHIP

DAMON is dead and Pythias with the dust,
The harp of David stilled; and yet the years
Still echo with their names as disappears
All coarser fact; and, as pure wine from must,
Freed from the setting of barbaric lust
The deeper meaning of the legend clears!
And, golden, lo, the truth the more endears
Type of all friendships, love and sacred trust.
For though the sun, no longer in its flight,
Gilds Judah's hall, or Syracusan gate,
Levelled the pinnacles, man's potent creed,
That lifts the humblest to immortal height,
Remains to break the blow of crowding fate,
When self is immolate for other's need!

LOVE AND DEATH

WHERE Love is 'tis sacred spot.
Bow the head and reverence!
Coo from cradle, cry from cot,
Child at breast redeems the lot.
Ah, to those who know this not,
Joy is theirs in severance!

Where Death is 'tis holy ground.
Bow the head and reverence!
As Grief's litanies resound,
Then Love breaks all earthly bound,
Gazes rapt through vast profound,
For it knows not severance.

AT THE STATE HOUSE

(*Independence Hall*)

NE'ER through these arches walked the sceptred great,
A-jest with Pompadours, a-blind with pride,
Whilst millions toiled and, all-despairing, cried
Against the burdens of the despot State.
Ah, no! these halls a nobler tale relate—
Of wilds redeemed, of labor glorified,
Of equal rights to humblest ne'er denied,
Of men to liberty full consecrate.
O walls, ye house a shrine of priceless worth!
O tower, thine outlook broadens with the day!
O bell, unsounding, thou art far from mute.
Lo, Freedom, here encradled, fills the earth
With richest blessings; lo its puissant sway
Nor continents confine, nor seas dispute.

WHEN ABSENT

SWEET anguish of desire when thou art near,
Sweet pain when far away;
Yet, I were happy wert thou ever here;
So, prithee, stay!

'Tis true I learn anew thy priceless worth
By contrast when alone;
But, oh how small indeed the joys of earth
When thou art gone!

As one, awake, soul-sick for morning yearns
As night drags wearily;
So, absent, all my anxious thought e'er turns
To hope of thee.

With thee beside I'll put to flight the drear
And hail the newer day!
If I risk all to have thee ever near,
Canst thou say nay?

AFTER HEARING DVORAK'S E-MINOR (NEW WORLD) SYMPHONY

O LIST, what ecstasy as singers keep
The chant a-swinging! Hark, a livelier tune
As pace turns faster under the Harvest moon
And, gourds a-rattling, ebon dancers leap
With laugh and lilt. Such sounds this music steep,
While plaint of flute and buzz of hoarse bassoon
And wail of oboe (is it the beldame's croon?)
Murmur a people's wrongs as viols weep.
And yet, O race despised, what victory thine!
The haughty master-folk confess thy power;
Strength lies in weakness, for the whispered groan
Of anguished song, sweet balm for weary hour,
Transfigured, midst the harmonies divine,
Becomes of art inspiring corner-stone.

AWAKENED

After a Lapse of Time

METHOUGHT I had forgotten all;
Thine every look, thy way, thy life,
O'erwhelmed beneath the ready pall,
We weave of things of daily strife;
The casual things to which we turn
For surcease when the past we spurn.

But, no; though seeming hidden deep
Beneath life's husks, its sophistries,
As blooms brush-hid during winter's sleep
Revealed by stir of April's breeze
Perfume the air; so at thy name
Love reasserts its olden claim.

And lo, I find completely held
Thine image, perfect, glorified;
Naught has been lost, no day has knelled
Affection's wane, nor hope denied;
A brief eclipse, mere passing phase,
As memory sets the soul ablaze.

No longer therefore can the round
  Of chilling duties satisfy;
No longer fettered, at one bound,
  I seek thy side; emboldened, I
Ask but recall of thy decree
Since, love, I live alone for thee!

THE ELECT

WHOSE are these narrow homes of low estate?
Green barrows, swellings of the field
Scarce marked by pallid stones that yield
Their runes to time, and so obliterate
That nothing tells the tale of small or great,
Or name, or deeds, in pompous line revealed?
Mystery for shroud and all the past concealed
What is the meaning of their common fate?
Lo, these sought Fame and were her votaries,
Her dear elect, who knew no stress of pain
Nor checked desire as long as fluttered breath;
Who drank the wine of life to very lees,
E'en, impious, tore the temple veil in twain,
Brake in the shrine to find—the face of death!

UNRECONCILED

(*Molto Appassionata*)

WHY should I halt my grief?
What is to-morrow?
Hath it aught of relief?
Can it heal sorrow?
Bitter the cry before,
Dregs now my portion;
Hath time surcease in store?
Is not Creed's mystic lore
Mere mind distortion?

What to me words of man,
What comfort giving?
Can they remove death's ban,
Give back the living?
Out upon soothing phrase,
Empty, unstable!
Canst thou those happy days,
Brow fresh with manhood's bays
Call back by fable?

Is this the triumph of faith,
Is this hope's guerdon,

That wraith should meet with wraith?
  Heavier the burden!
I will declare my woe
  Here at life's portals,
Unreconciléd go,
Lone, sad, nor care to know
  Mortal, immortal.

IMPRESSIONS OF NEW YORK

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APPROACHING THE FERRIES

(*At Night in Winter*)

ROUGH Hunding's note the groping whistles bleat,
Pale snowy Valkÿrs scurry through the sky;
Sudden, from out the mist of drifting sleet,
A vast light-strewn Valhalla smites the eye!

AT THE OPERA

("*Fledermaus*")

Parterres of human peacocks after Fragonard,
Gay pride of person, such as Watteaus strew
In gardened glades. And lo, with Courts afar,
The Old World, robbed, doth gew-gaw out the New.

(*"Tannhauser"*)

While jewelled fashion here, in pomp enthroned,
In silken satisfaction plays its part,
All, all to music tribute, not disowned
Pan leads his troop; Orpheus is at the heart!

BROADWAY

(*Midnight*)

Is this the way the prophets saw
White with the light of love and youth?
Is this the way that knows no law
Save passion without ruth?
Under the thrill of quivering sense,
Broad, indeed, is the way, and well,
Under the glamor of life intense,
May its swift reaches seize on Hell!

DIGGING FOUNDATIONS AT NIGHT

(*Cortland Street*)

Here, where the forges sound their giant scale
Of thud and groan, and braziers belch their smoke;

In depths, unseen, backs bent, nor fear, nor quail
The myriads toil; bearing in cheer the yoke,
Knowing full well that soon, aloft, will rise
Some new Aladdin's dream, scraping the very skies.

THE PINES, SIXTY-SEVENTH STREET

(*Central Park—Looking Southward*)

Though winds are bleak this greening tells of May,
Lit by the winter sunset's trailing gleam,
And the susurrus speaks of far-a-way,
Some mountain scarp, some hurrying woodland stream—
Yet roofed sierras crowd on every side,
And ceaseless flows this restless human tide.

THE UNFINISHED CATHEDRAL

(*Evening—Morningside Heights, from below*)

Sprung from a mighty hulk, o'er-arched on high,
Gigantic, elemental ribs protrude;

In deepening mist-swept eve, beneath a livid sky
What æon tale of horror here doth brood?

THE "SQUARE" IN THE SLUMS

Thine, though the city's squalor jars,
A wildwood touch with grass a-dew;
A hint of life beneath the stars,
Contentment underneath the blue.

ON LOWER BROADWAY

In the fierce rush of storm-swept ocean
Who counts the fleck of foam upon the wave?
And who, O city, in thy wild commotion,
One soul who treads this pave?

ON "PARADE"

Here where the coarse and tawdry spell of woman flares
In vice, desire the bestial goad,
A sweet-faced childling toddles, smiling, unawares—
A jewel set in head of toad.

THE CITY AT SUNSET

(*From the Hudson River*)

Like some huge monster, gorged, misshapen, spread in blinking ease,
Its bloated arms entangling all that's rare;
The flash of gem, the enacred shell, life's loveliest argosies
And slugs most foul swept up from slime-filled lair.

THE RUSH AT THE BRIDGE

All that they know of life and home the lure
That leads to panic madness, as of brutes, this host!
What will not sons of men endure
To gain the side of those they love the most?

MISTY DAWN FROM THE EAST RIVER (SOUND STEAMER)

(*August*)

Flushed are these fronts with hectic touch of day,

The quickening streets reek with the
morning's murk
Scarcely asleep, the all too-burning ray
Awakens all to toil, to day-long work.

AMERICA—A TRIPTYCH

AMERICA

A TRIPTYCH

(*Centripetal*)

THE endless prairies billow with thy grain,
The forest fastness falls before thy will,
The mountain barriers, cleft, proclaim thy skill,
Nor gorge, nor desert reach, nor floods restrain
Thy imperious way. Thy bulging coffers drain
The frozen Ophirs of the trackless north;
And lo, from out Earth's farthest bounds come forth
The steeled leviathans! whose hoarse refrain
Of conquered steam, mid rush and stir of keel,
Wakens the echoes at thy water gate,
Where the dazed aliens greet thy sunlit way,
Seeking new lands, new life, a deeper weal—

Whilst thou, supreme, sitt'st confident,—elate,
"Mewing a mighty youth" in time's new day.

(*In the Vortices—The Cities*)

The hills, asunder riven, here pile anew
Their corniced heights, whose precipices fret
The half-hid heavens. Far below, the set
Of human tide outpours its surges through
The narrowed lanes, as mighty currents strew
The shore with yields of opulent emprise;
Ventures of Jotunheim, as giant vies
With giant in the will to dare and do.
And what from out this thousand-streeted moil?
An epic, far more eloquent than tale
Of heroes which Circean weft displayed.
Here, where the altars rise to honest toil,
Freed from the tyrant bonds of narrowed pale,
Man's right to rise, in naught is checked or stayed.

(*Centrifugal*)

Nor yields this Crœsus gift thy sole acclaim;
Though to the marts at utmost set of sun
Thy trade decretals undisputed run,
And, ever-widening, spreads thy circling fame,
Above the lure of gold the great win name,
And genius, place, in thy forensic stress;
Thy Letters shower remotest wilderness
And Art finds here revivifying flame!
O, what, before thy splendor, purple Tyre?
What Babylon, whose potsherds strew the sands?
What Nineveh, or Thebes whose walls lie prone?
Oblivion's realm; of pride the wind-swept pyre—
But here, the People, envied of all lands,
Perpetuate, rule; thy seat their dazzling throne!

TO CANADA AND—KIPLING

(On reading his Quatrain "Quebec," from the Canadian edition of the "Seven Seas," but which, through a desire of reciprocity in gain, was omitted by the "Laureate of Empire" from the American edition.)*

'TIS not at all that cockney souls should vent
Their littleness in "absent-minded" spleen,
(This is an olden tale with force unspent)
That so revolts like blow from alley slut
To those who've "killed by kindness" through and through;
But that a neighbor stoops to low and mean,
And eke exacts, a small revenge to glut,
From "bounder" bard this cheap time-serving due!

*QUEBEC

From thy gray scarp I view with scornful eyes
Ignoble broil of freedom most unfree,
But fear not Mother, where the carrion lies
There that unclean bird must be.

FROM THE "OTHER SIDE"

IN VENICE

THAT I with thee, along the tideless stream
Might idly float—as night's deep purples stretch
A canopy and moonlit belfrys etch
Their grace of line upon the wave—and dream
Of joys to be.

That I with thee, whilst music steals the ears,
Should let mine eyes alone reveal the sign
Of heart desire, and find my fate in thine,
Whose light of love gives hope to all the years
And life to me.

That I with thee, full-furled the hurrying sail,
In some soft shallop, silken-hung, might drift

To where the mystic sunset portals lift
Their burnished gold—and find, behind the
veil,
New ecstasy!

UNDER THE DOME OF THE INVALIDES

(*At the Tomb of Napoleon*)

NOT as proud Pharaoh in dark chambers laid,
Not as great Cæsar niched in crowded gloom,
But shrined before the altar's golden brume
Under the dome of kings, all unafraid,
Whose sapphire lights, blue as Elysian glade,
As marble walls reflect the gleaming tomb,
A Hero's zodiac in stone illume.
And yet, 'tis not what fame assembles here
That strikes the soul as awe-compelling dream,
Exalting those who, silent, humbly scan
The accidents of homage at this bier,
But since above this clay abides, supreme,
The very boding presence of the Man!

MONA LISA

("*La Gioconda*")

A MARY who hath yielded more than heart,
Serene, thou smilest in thy calm disdain,
At thought of censor tongues a-tilt in vain,
As envious Marthas eased the bitter smart
Of loveless ways, knowing no nobler part,
And found oblivion. Thine the eternal gain!
Time yields its guerdon, whatsoe'er the pain,
Though sacrificed, thou liv'st in deathless art!—
And so above all petty circumstance
Of earthly fact we may e'en now divine,
—Howe'er inscrutable thy baffling glance—
Behind that beauty that exacts its toll,
The marvel that the things of clay enshrine,
The mystery of life, the human soul.

IN COLOGNE CATHEDRAL

A PURPLE twilight falls within the nave,
As if some sunset, far, where bleak winds sough,
Were seen through beechen forest, gaunt of bough;
And all the aisles, as organ murmurs lave
The up-reaching vaults, echo the chanted stave,
Which, swelling, rises soft, a whispered vow—
And oh, what radiant joy, what thoughts endow
These faces, rapt, with hopes: like those that gave
To martyrs—calm when Nero's lions pressed—
A look that awed the worldlings drunk with power.
Yea, in the altar glow, the long, long Past
Conquers the Present in this fretted vast,
And Rome renews her full triumphant hour
Through sanctuary in each faithful breast!

IN A NORTH GERMAN WOODLAND

("*Im Walde*")

THE depths invite, beyond the sun-strewn park,
Beyond red roofs, agleam at even-tide;
Past spectral birches, where cool waters glide,
Guarding the edge, as beeches gray and stark
In narrowing lanes the forest highways mark;
Green depths that stretch fir-bounded far and wide,
A leaf-flecked weft, full tapestried
In mystic gold, ere falls the silvern dark.
O, woods! what olden echo still resounds,
What minstrel note of dim enchanted deed
Sung at the cradle of a mighty race!
What magic in this fairy land abounds,
Throwing, o'er hidden tarn and flowery mead,
A haunting folk-spell time can ne'er efface!

TANNHAUSER'S CASTLE

(*Nocturne—The Valley of the Wartburg, Eisenach*)

THOU shinest there, serene in darkening sky,
O evening star! though long the æon's toll
Ere man, uplifted, felt the thrill of soul,
And, quickened by thy grateful beaconry
Above the mount, saw, in this sign on high,
Emblem of Hope to those once lost in dole,
Knight, saint and churl, groping in noisome hole
Where love and faith lay, seeming doomed to die—
And, as these valleys ring with summer mirth,
Thy radiant glory there proclaims anew
The truth that man lives not by bread alone!
And, though Trade's noisy wains go hurtling through
These forest aisles, here Art, on leafy throne,
Sees Spirit triumph o'er the things of earth!

IN FRANCE

SOUVENIR OF THE MIDI

(*Near Carcasonne*)

A SUMMER glow burns on the fields,
The poppy by the furrow drowses,
The matin wind its treasure yields
Of distilled sweets its breeze arouses
In leisured, lazy, drifting flight
Through shut-in gardens of delight.

Beyond, where brave weeds climb the hill,
O'er sun-scorched path their pennons flaunting,
The white road makes its way at will;
Nor height, nor slope its ardor daunting,
But hastens tree-embowered down,
The long, long vale into the town.

And lo, as carls in petty trade
Seek there their gain with wit that's nimble,
Above the New, all undismayed,
The Old looms gray in grim cut symbol;

An eagle eyrie, broodlings flown,
Telling its tale in serrate stone.

Unchanged, these turrets seek the sky;
  Unchanged, the postern breaks the ingle;
Fretting the same broad canopy
  The ruddy-channeled roofs commingle;
Perchance some Sleeping Beauty waits
The Prince's knock within these gates!

For oh, the world of fume seems far
  Beyond this blue horizon hidden!
No echoes from its Babel mar
  This bastioned close; its pomps unbidden
Its gauds unseen, its voice unheard
Disturb not song of stream or bird.

Nations may rage and rulers plot,
  The great may wive and thrive or perish,
Millions may look to turn of lot
  For weal or woe to all they cherish;
But here life's currents go their way
Serene in peace that knows no day!

IN ITALY

TEMPLE OF DIANA—LAKE OF NEMI

(*Spring on the Alban Hills*)

ROYAL mottlings on the green
Of cyclamen and eglantine,
Nodding close, or, waving free
O'er the rising terraced lea,
Hidden in the ways embowered,
Filling alleys orange-flowered,
Gay mosaics, garden planned,
Blooming fresh at Spring's command;
Royal mottlings on the green
Of cyclamen and eglantine.

There the lofty height cascades
Roseate blooms, where else pervades
Spice of laurel, myrtle, box
As the wind the scent unlocks,
Spreads the attar on the breeze,
Shakes the tassels of the trees,
Scattering freely dust of gold
O'er the ivy-covered mould;

Royal mottlings on the green
Of cyclamen and eglantine.

In the woods where Dian stalks
'Midst cupped Nemi's lovely walks,
Lo, the cuckoo's echoing call
Booms within the living wall,
Tree-fringed, offering to the sky,
Its sincerest flattery,
Sweep of azure as above
Smiling as if love to love,
Shadowing there the hours serene
Of cyclamen and eglantine!

IN THE GARDEN OF GALILEO—FLORENCE

("*E Pur Si Muove*")

"AND still it moves," the master, broken, cried,
Holding the vision of the turning earth
Swinging its orbit round; a thing of mirth
For the schooled dunces who the fact belied.
And still it moves! Howe'er they in their pride
Turned from the miracle of the mind's rebirth
The glorious later dawn, the newer worth
Of man, with all things searched and weighed and tried.
And still it moves! O prophecy of light!
Beaconed by stake and consecrate by blood,
And loosed from all the gyves of bigot power
Lo, knowledge, in its new unfettered might,
Sweeps on in one great universal flood
To final triumph in predestined hour.

AT ST. PETER'S—A CANONIZATION

VISIONS of John on Patmos! Choir on choir
Of witnesses in tribute throng, world sent,
Crowding the aisles in awed bewilderment,
'Midst crimson glow of pillars lined in fire!
And, in the chair, as incense rises higher,
Sits one enthroned in whose white pomp is blent
All that men know of state, of grave intent;
While blazoned banners all the hosts inspire
With marvels told of him who, e'en despite
The threats of ill won this immense acclaim;
And lo, beneath the surface pageant lies
The truth, near lost in this so dazzling sight,
That to the humblest comes a deathless fame,
Through sacrifice of self that men may rise.

THE GREEK TEMPLES AT PAESTUM

(550—450 B. C.)

THE stately ruins of a Greece that dared
Strange seas and lands, whose epic tale enthralls
And holds one spellbound 'neath these gray-gold walls;
Sun-leached and worn by all the winds that bared
Long since their secrets to the skies, where fared
Once happy throngs crowding the lofty halls,
Rose garlanded as fading page recalls,
Deserted, lone! All else the Past upreared
Lies hidden, crushed, the broken sherds of Time.
But lo, as gods their puissance oft unsealed
While still encradled, in these fanes we see
Majestic forecasts, triumphs still to be;
In the proud lift of column full revealed
The wondrous childhood of an art sublime.

ROME

The Palaces of the Cæsars in May

WHERE marbled heights uprose in tortured pride
The nightingales are singing in the trees,
While rose-scents weight the swooning evening breeze,
And temples, stark and staring, side by side
Mark out the Forum—though full shrunk the tide
That sweeps across these scarred and broken leas
Where trod the great of earth, whose masteries
Of land and wave flung empire far and wide!
O Rome! whose golden hills salute the light
Still wall begirt, all, all that man may do
To force oblivion on thy storied years
Can ne'er efface this whelming scorn of might—

Writ large in dust that once escaled the blue—
This might that crumbled since it knew not tears!

In the Coliseum—Moonlight

O'er arch and curving rim the soft light steals,
And all this circling vast yields to the spell,
And looms a shrine where Night and Silence dwell,
Since what the day, so pitiless, reveals
Of gaping wound, this silvery haze conceals,
The while evoking fleeting wraiths that tell
The boding secrets of this shadowy hell,
Whose riven beauty hauntingly appeals.
For, as rare Venus, reft of arms, still daunts
All new perfection; or Apollo maimed,
Or Niké, from some island 'scarpment hurled,
So this grim torso, summing Rome, e'er vaunts
Its blood-stained splendor, never yet outfamed,
And rules the wonder city of the world!

The Protestant Cemetery

Asleep, unwatched by those whose names they bore—
Dear names and scripts that tell of home-loved ways—
They rest, beneath the laurel's freshening bays
And myrtles, guardians of the nether shore;
At last at peace, whate'er their life before,
Great or unknown, worthy of blame or praise,
They sought the dalliance of sunlit days
Whose magic roads lead Romeward as of yore,
But heard, amid her ruins, Death's low call.
And, oh, what pathos in these simple tombs,
For some the very crypts of dull despair,
Where else the hands of love do smooth the pall!
What tears for them, exiled, amid these glooms,
Forever from fond hearts of those that care!

At Hadrian's Villa

'Mid olive groves, pallid and ivy bound,
Fantastic, gnarled in trunk and tracery,
And where dark cypresses spring heaven-
ward, free,
And terraces with massy oaks are crowned,
Colossal vaults upthrust whose cliffs astound
The wanderer from the long-sloped flowing
sea
Of broad Campagna, stretching distantly,
Whose tinkling murmurs everywhere re-
sound.
And can it be that this so great emprise,
This filch of glories mirroring many lands,
Greece, Egypt, Asia, yea, the very heart
Of loveliness, when men dared all for art,
Was sheer caprice, as one plays with com-
mands?
Surely some god bid this enchantment rise!

From the Ilex Groves, Villa Medici

The sun sinks barred in pines on Mario's
crest;
The swallows, screaming, fleck the golden air,

Whilst all the myriad bells of Rome declare
In silvern tones the hour of vesper rest;
And, as the light fails in the dying west,
And Night is loosed from out its Sabine lair,
Through ilex boskage, dim, strange shapes do stare,
As if the unquiet dead with hectic zest
Of days afar sought here their old-time life—
Giving quick gleam of Messalina's face
Leering through treillage, sick for wanton boon,
Or, the lithe line of death-defying grace
Of Antinous. Ah! what fancies here are rife,
Evoked of dust and the wan crescent moon!

*On the Spanish Steps—Midnight**

In swift cascade the steps, scarce seeming stone,
Fall double-sourced from mount to street below,

* Hard by the house of Keats.

Eddying in broken ivory waves that flow
Past moon-touched balustrades and bulwarks thrown
Against the slope, to where the pulsing moan
Of fount, complaining 'neath the lamp's dim glow,
Breaks the dark silence of the palaced row
Whose rambling pave e'er broadens, memory strewn.
And, as the Poet's spirit stirs the square,
Fancy, on fire from this unquenched flame,
Moved as by visions glimpsed in mystic tome,
Sees from the heavens descend the angelic stair,
And, all transfigured, e'en the alien name
Senses the soul, th' eternal heart of Rome!

HUMORESQUE

HUMPTY-DUMPTY

(As the Author of "Paradise Lost" Might Have Written It)

HIGH on a wall that far aloft, uprist—
Above the stretch of plain extending far
Till distance dimming hid the realm's extent,
Resourceful in its might of means and men,
Above the mass of barbican and keep,
All crenelated in the Guelphic style,
Whose deep machicolations told of strength
And towering heights commanded the demesne,
Whose sheer effect, unbroken, smote the sky
Not roughly hewn in blocks ranged tier on tier,
With line irregular or rudely stepped,
But shining adamant laid evenly
With joints concealed by cunning of the Ind,
Whose swart artificers laid stone on stone
And wrought the marvel as by wizardry,

And topped the glistening face with pictured
frieze—
High up, so high that Babel was surpassed,
On jutting cornice, dizzily emperched,
Lo, proud of station, Humpty-Dumpty sat!

* * * * *

Tell, Muse, who once upon the Roman hills
Sang of the rise and fall of human pride,
Who saw the Cæsars humbled in the dust,
Who erst had built them golden palaces
On marble steeps and ruled the encircling
world
With kings as galley slaves and household
guards;
Or, of that older line beloved of Bel
Whose habitations terraced all the banks,
Where broad Euphrates spread his reedy
waste,
Tho' naught now marks the site save shape-
less mounds,
The refuge for the jackal and the owl,
What once was seat of proud Assyria's
lords—
Tell, Muse, still pondering o'er the storied
past,

In stately number of this later woe
When Humpty-Dumpty slipped and tumbled o'er!
What were the sad results to men set out;
Since ages still do chant the plaintive lay,
And hold the tragedy in awe, and cry
Against injustice and too sudden fate
By which God's ways are writ in rigid laws
Inscrutable to mortal eyes at times,
Nor justified by every prattling bard!
The why and how 'twas Humpty-Dumpty fell
From periled state and lost his eagle poise
When fortune seemed to smile and e'en exult.
Tell, Muse, and of that fall, lo, quick, relate
How whizzing like a ball from ammiral's gun,
Sent upward then descending to the ground,
Or, like some meteor, seen athwart the sky,
Whose horrid trail of fire affrights the Popes,
And, though forbid by bulls, goes streaming on,
With swift acceleration falling down
In unremitting flight till earth is struck

Then dissipating into air is lost,
How Humpty-Dumpty, from his eyrie shot,
Fell through the shuddering air that could not hold
The swift displacement of his weighty bulk.
And so, fell on, past towers and pinnacles,
Past parapets and balconies in line,
Where fair ones shrieked to see the spectacle.
Nor hand could save him e'en had any willed,
Past lower battlements with final cry,
Until the courtyard pave with sickening thud
Receives what once was semblance of a man!
Tell, Muse, moreover, as a hint to those
Who oft in vain essays do waste their strength,
In tasks Sisýphean, what the aftermath,
The final consequences of this fall; relate
How all the foolish, yea and e'en the wise,
With divinations strange sought out relief,
To right the fallen; yea, but all in vain!
In vain the lamentations of the host,
In vain the grief of those of high estate,
In vain the engineries invoked,

All, all, in vain, naught, naught was of avail;
Nor all the pomp and pageantry of power,
Nor all the puissance of royal state,
Nor all the king's great horse, a princely troop,
Some forty thousand ready for the word,
Nor men on foot, some myriads in arms,
Acting in severalty, or all in one
With mighty unanimity at work,
Could set poor Humpty-Dumpty up again!
For such the dire confusion of the fall
That men, in wonderment themselves e'en asked
If e'er he sat upon the wall on high,
So scarcely seemed he built for such estate.
They wot not if their minds were not awry
When what had been was memoried in the face
Of what was there before their streaming eyes;
And, still amazed, still questioning what it meant,

Betook them to their tasks and went their ways

* * * * *

Tell, Muse, this tale, so that in years to come,
As nursery jingles sing in sobbing rhyme
Of Humpty-Dumpty and the uprising wall,
The world may pause and drop its meed of tears
O'er him to fateful end predestinate!

A LINE OR SO—IN VARYING MOODS

"EVENING," BY GEORGE INNESS

THE western sky, cloud woven, is quick
with cunning fires,
O'er all the graying mystery of
evening broods;
Transmuting grosser things the very brush
aspires,
And man reveals himself in Nature's
subtlest moods.

MOONRISE AT SEA

OUT of the wave-spun murk, a golden
ball;
Over the sea a wizard light,
An elfin dance where the soft beams fall,
A truce to night.

FATE

DARK-CENTRED in the garden path
the busy life
Of teeming ants; a little world
in great
Where all is mirrored; peace domestic,
alien strife:
Then heedless step of man—and all's
annihilate.

DULLARDS!

SOME souls, like worlds long dead, still
circle round
A central orb; their gloom the very
heart of night outstrips;
In dull opacity they hug their bound,
Revealed alone by that which they eclipse.

WHEN AMONG FOOLS

THOUGH rare the gem, if but the sordid mass
Of crude complacency returns, in dulled response, its gaze,
Its facets flash not, lo, as through a glass
Blurred and obscured its timid beauty plays!

LOVE'S SOLSTICE

(*Christmas*)

LEST human hearts grow cold and bitter in the endless drear
Of world-strife, battling long with cankered self and guile
Unhindered; lo, a day is set; life brightens with all cheer
As love's dear Solstice rules, its sun a baby's smile!

ACQUAINTED!

AH, the joy in the greeting!
Serene, for the moment no longer alone!
And yet, in the meeting,
A pang at the heart; one might not have known.

THE OLD DOOR KNOCKER

THESE hand worn knobs the years betray,
Long years of many a miss and meeting;
Yet freely lift and knock to-day,
Doors gladly turn at friendly greeting—
Give hearty "welcome" while they may,
Since life and love are ever fleeting.

PORTENTS

THE crescent moon of yestere'en
Hung baleful in the tawny light,
Its cusps, a-tilt, held blood between
As fell the grisly night.
The air from off the stagnant fen
Came thick, a carrion-scented breath—
A lonely bird's shrill scream, and then
A hush——the hush of death!

WRITTEN ON THE FLY-LEAF OF A BOOK ON "ACOUSTICS"

THIS is the science that unlocks
The mysteries of the quivering note,
Whose lowest diapason rocks
The walls, and strains the reedy throat;
Whilst Echo, listening with all ears,
Can scarcely catch the fairy tone—
True music of celestial spheres—
As the touched string yields up its moan
Of harmonies, that rise and die
In beauty that is ecstasy.

THE BURIAL

ALL day long dragged the weary hours,
With tongue of bell, the throb of drum, the dole of those who mourn,
Till lo, where sable curtain dowers
The West with signs of funery,
Beyond the marge of earthly bowers,
The portals ope their jasper gates, reveal the sun-swept bourne,
Set in a crystal pavéd sea,
The dazzling sign of living hope to those who walk forlorn;
The calm depths of eternity.

CONTRAST

SMILING, while others mourn,
Joyful, sorrow we scorn;
Mourning, as others smile,
Sadly the hours we while.
Wings the world too this way;
One part night; one part day.

INEVITABLE

BLOCK by block we build, nor see
Lever of grim destiny;
Laugh in joyance as we pave
Pathway to the open grave.
While we pity others' fate
Death knocks loudly at the gate.

REAPING

LOVE to Death: "O, reap not here,
There are fields more brown and sere,
Spare this tender, budding ear."
Death to Love: "I garner where
I may find the fruits most fair.
Think ye husks fill up my share?"

SUCCESSFUL

(*Cræsus Speaketh*)

STRUGGLED?—yes, for years; sought high and low,
Nothing withstood; and then supreme command!
But even soul was sold—it did not count—
And now—ah, God! the very last of woe!
To stand within the glamor of the land
And only know the shadow of the mount!

CONFESSIO

I DO not know whence all this sprang,
The world-stuff of the stellar main,
When morning stars together sang
And harmonies most subtle rang.
And what, the last dread veil in twain,
The scene, where Cause alone doth reign,
I do not know.
Whether behind the mystic mien
Of law in nature, force serene,
The face of love can yet be seen
I do not know.
And though effects their secrets tell,
Forecast the final end of all,
Whether there's aught beside the pall,
And life, that stands for more than cell,
Lives on, eterne, and all is well,
I do not know.

CHOICE!

THE path was broad; the reaches, open to the sun
On either side, through pillared colonnade
Gave free access, e'en as the fleeting whim
Might seize; enchanting vistas loomed, whose choice
Was as the will to choose, without dispute,
As invitation smiled on every hand.

* * * * *

For thus it seemed, as on the pilgrim fared
Ere yet the milestone years had told their tale;
Till lo, with heights well gained, and past in view
In full perspective, wonderful the change!
One road but meets the eye, of narrow bounds;
Hemmed in; no turn to right or left; straight on;
Closed as an alley pleached with marble walls,
Unbroken as to base or fluted shaft;
The way marked out, and inescapable!

MEASUREMENT

DEAREST, the world indeed is small, narrow its plan!
Its millioned reaches but fantastic dream
Of seething marts, dark distances that hide
Strange things afar, remote, beyond the stream
Of multitude, beyond the swell of human tide.
And yet, what if the gloomy ocean beds
Stretch vastly, and the swelling land
Knows every clime, from ice-bound polar dreads
To tropic lures? Since we command
Our fate, let others fight the crowding things that seem—
Dearest, the world indeed is small; two hearts its span!

ON NE BADINE PAS AVEC L'AMOUR

HIS love had kindled all her life
Until there came the grievous wrong
Too hurt for words, too cowed for strife,
Honor, enmired, dragged scarce along.
Woe came to her. He went his way;
But master turned the slave that day.
And rich in lands, in all else poor,
On ne badine pas avec l'amour.

He traveled far in climes most strange,
And many nestled by his side,
Nor healed the ache. What profits change?
Heart turned to stone at beck of pride,
Youth wasted, spent itself in vain;
Fled nor returned the old-time pain,
Ah, rich in gold, in all else poor,
On ne badine pas avec l'amour.

Years told their passage on the brow,
Time ravaged all he held most dear,
No hands outstretched to greet him now,
And all but memory, withered, sere.

Unloved, unsought, tho' deep his lore,
Full humbled could he ask for more?
And rich in life, in all else poor,
On ne badine pas avec l'amour.

BALLAD

(*With a Double Refrain*)

"'TIS some day soon the ship will away
(Oh, it's work to-day and rest to-morrow)
And bring my darling back to me.
'Tis some day soon—what is that you say?—
And a glad home-comin' it will be."
(Oh, it's work to-day, to-morrow)
"So here I wait for him," she said.
How could they tell her he was dead?

"He's toilin' hard for me—And then
(Oh, it's work to-day and rest to-morrow)
He wasn't the likely lad to write;
Sure, 'tis idle folk who are quick of pen,
And there's not much chance in his tent at night."
(Oh, it's work to-day, to-morrow)
"So here I wait for him," she said.
They could not tell her he was dead.

"And you all mean well, but I heed you not;
(Oh, it's work to-day and rest to-morrow)
For the world is big and the world is wide.
'Tis not so easy to choose your lot
And luck needs coaxing to take your side."
(Oh, it's work to-day, to-morrow)
"He's comin' home to me," she said—
"How dare you say my boy is dead?"

And the days rolled up a tale of years.
(Oh, it's work to-day and rest to-morrow)
And she still hoped on though her heart was sore.
And dimmed were those eyes oft wet with tears;
Till lo! one day, as she watched the door,
(Oh, it's work to-day, to-morrow)
"Why there's my darling, at last!" she said.
"I knew he would come"—And she too was dead.

LULLABY

(*For E. E. M.*)

SANDMAN o'er the house is flying,
Darkening all the purple sky;
And the stars are peeking, spying
From the windows up so high.
Sleep and slumber,
Who shall number
Fays of elfland crowding near?
Softly singing,
Harebells ringing,—
Sleep and slumber; night is here!

E'en the birds have ceased their calling,
Hushed and silent, lo, they rest;
Heads are drooping, heads are falling
Nestling close on mother's breast.
Sleep and slumber,
Who shall number
Fays of elfland crowding near?
Softly singing,
Harebells ringing,—
Sleep and slumber; night is here!

Lights in all the lanes are blinking,
Every tot is snug at home;
Only pussy sits a-thinking
Of the chance in dark to roam.
Sleep and slumber,
Who shall number
Fays of elfland crowding near?
Softly singing,
Harebells ringing,—
Sleep and slumber; night is here!

Closer! closer! eyelids tighten;
Fades the memory of the day;
Shut for good! there's naught to frighten,
Sleep and dream the hours away!
Sleep and slumber,
Who shall number
Fays of elfland crowding near?
Softly singing,
Harebells ringing,—
Sleep and slumber; night is here!

WHEN VENUS VIES

WHEN Venus with fair Dian vies,
Emblazoned on the wintry skies,
And lusty Boreas, rough of throat,
Pours forth in hurtling blasts his note;
The day in lovelier evening dies
When Venus vies.

Then comes the gentle hour, when glows
The firelight on the cheek's pale rose;
And softer gleam in Lydia's eyes
When Venus vies.

And, as beneath the tree-fringed hill
The low moon hides, a subtle thrill
Is felt as one star's magic light
Illumes the dusk. As falls the night,
E'en dull-edged time serenely flies
When Venus vies.

TIME—WHO CARES BECAUSE 'TIS FLEETING?

(*Catch for a Class Reunion*)

TIME?—who cares because 'tis fleeting,
Years are but a day?
Older?—well a heartier greeting,
Sing a roundelay!

FAME?—we've courted, yea, and chaffed her,
She's a jade, you know.
Flout her; she's all smiles and laughter,
Just won't let you go!

LOVE?—we've won, or lost, what matter;
Make the best of fate!
Truly, vows are idle chatter;
Cupid's blind, I'd state!

LIFE?—we've lived its fullest measure,
Sorrow they who may;
Take no tale of gold or treasure,
Here's content alway!

JOY?—'tis in the present hour;
Why, we're not of age!
Sunlit now, whate'er may lower,
Hope on every page!

HUNGER; OR, "THE BREAD OF LIFE"

HUNGER

OR

"THE BREAD OF LIFE"

(*Charity Under the Old Regime*)

The Elect.

FRED.—Hello, old boy! Why, what's your hurry? haste
Ne'er yet became your style.
BOB.— Just as you will.
To-day Miss R. returns to town, you know.
FRED.—Oh, Polly Ritter! Good! I hope her smiles
Will end this rain. Though, come to think, by Jove!
She raised a tempest at the Pier.
BOB.— Cut that!
It takes a girl of brains to stir things up.
And then, you know, well——
FRED.— Hang it all, well what?
You haven't? Out with it, old man. Confess!

You've got to break the news some day,
you know.
Your face is eloquent whate'er your words,
And silence in such matters spells "I'm
hit."
You'll dine with me this eve I hope. The
Club.
Miss Polly's charm will surely grant you
leave
At least, you haven't lost your appetite,
And then I'll play the eager listener,
And let you tell the "story of your life."
No, no; I mean the story of your love.
BOB (*hesitating*).—All right. I'll come.
You see, it's this way, Fred——
FRED.—Of course—I'll hear it all to-night.
And Bob, at seven
Remember, sharp!

(*Later entering the X Club.*)

Just half past six. I got here early. Boy,
The evening papers! Dr. Marchand here?

(*Sits down by the large window in a low easy leather chair and reads.*)

More crimes! And type that fills the page.
I wonder which is worse, the deed, or print

That magnifies it to the uttermost
Till none escape it; into every nook
Its influence sweeps and those who run
Not only may but must, however pressed,
Keep running hard lest they be overwhelmed,
And, like the rest, are swallowed up in "news."
Another murder, and, a "mystery!"
Of course, one hardly kills his man in fun,
With witnesses to catch one in the act.
That is the way among our Gallic friends
Who prick each other with a gentle sword
Or pepper with a pistolet in style,
And keep the code duello up to date
With vitascopic cameras at hand.
Our murderers, true conservatives,
Will none of that. They still work in the dark,
Prefer the secrecy of old romance.
And, 'tis surprising how so old a trade,
Or art—my bow to Cain,—remains unchanged
In motives, methods, even in the tools.
The Mafia, eh! I always told them so.

Let down the bars, drag all the Latins in,
Palermo's slums and Naples' reeking lanes,
And lo, your Sicilies will breed you germs,
Social bacilli, that the state,
With all its Boards and laws, cannot destroy.
Germs of a feverish discontent,
More to be feared than those that spell disease,
With foot-long names that Loeffler isolates
Or Haffkine worries with his antidotes.
Lord, how it rains! The very street's afloat!
(*Reads a while longer, then goes out to the dining room to order dinner.*)
Ah, pleasant odor that! The dinner card!
I hope the chef has some surprise in store,
Some specialty to take away the blues,
So! Sweetbreads, broiled with mushrooms, that's the jig,
A salmi; timbales in the latest vein;
John's table d'hôtes are devilish hard to beat.
How full the room, the season's under way.
McMaynooth's ordering supper with an air
Of o'er-ripe lord. No table d'hôte for him,

At home he dines in bourgeois style, I bet.
I'm getting hungry, for these sight and sounds
Are too suggestive—Bob's a lucky dog,
I hope he won't play Raleigh very long
And keep me starving while he sits and spoons—
Gad, but I wish I had his chance, I know—
Old Barker must be famished. One would think
His life had been a gastric phantasy
Of lunches snatched in railway restaurants.
Oh, yes, the menu! Dinner, as arranged.
A trifle extra with the sweets and cheese.
The soup? Oh, bisque of snails will do, I think;
The usual wines. The coffee served downstairs
And, mind! no camembert unless it's ripe.
(*Returns to reception room. Sinks into chair. A long wait.*)
This night's the devil's own. The rain comes down
In sheets as if the skies were all unhinged.
I wish that ass would come to time, it's late,

And to my mind there's nothing quite so bad
As waiting for a man behind the hour;
To sit in body-anguish, hungry, mad,
With nerves screwed up to expectation's point,
Whilst he, forsooth, is calm as fate itself.
I'm like a year-old bride, who, late at night,
In smart house frock with all the gas turned low
Awaits her lord, all frowns. But he, serene,
Surprised at naught, is ready with regret,
No lame excuse upon his mellow tongue.—
Those mushrooms. Well, I wonder if—
They made me sick on that dire midnight hour
I tackled one so ample that a toad
Could well have sheltered self and warty brood
Beneath its shade. Gad, this is getting worse!
It's rather classic though to sit and starve
In sight of plenty. Tantalus has stood
These many years for tropes to suit all tastes

A regular Atlas for the nimble wits.
If this keeps up I'll know the cow-boy's gripe
Who travels half a day without a bite—
Oh, here at last; now don't excuse yourself.
A lover's reasons need no diagram.
It's good you came just now. Later, perhaps,
A ravening man had seized your outstretched hand,
And, famished, played the dusky cannibal
With you the relevé. Of course! She did?
Why bless my soul, old man! But come, you're right,
We'll talk it over here!

(*They go out to dinner.*)

The Unelect.

Tom.—Nobody's home. So jes' beneath these steps,
Close to the basement door sit still and wait.
I won't be long. There's lots and lots of snaps
Around this section.

MAGGIE.— Yes, but hurry, do!

(*Tom goes away and Maggie huddles in the corner with ill success to get out of the driving November rain.*)

I feel so queer inside. All kind o' raw.
Poor Tom don't know how thin and gone I am.
I ain't yet told him. He's like all the boys.
He never sees as girls do what is up.
I ain't eat nothin' since the little scraps
Old Mommy Foran gave me t'other night—
It's chilly here. I wish the rain would stop.
It blows so awful, too, as if in spite.
It 'minds me of the night the p'lice pinched dad.
My how I cried! But Mom was awful glad.
He beat her so and never had a cent.
I wish he'd died in place of poor old Mom.
We'd never be at this. Oh, my, this rain!
If Tom would come, and it would only stop!
It seems an hour since he went away.
I'll take a peep. The wind jes' bites your face.
It blows all ways at once. My, my, the rain!

My frock's all stickin' to me, soakin' wet—
There's men at supper just across the way.
There's lots o' lights and things—and, ain't
it nice.
I wonder how it truly feels to eat
Just all you want as long as long can be?—
I'm trembly! How my forehead hurts!
If Tom would only come. But p'rhaps he's
caught.
But no, the p'lice won't move in all this pour.
Oh, won't it ever stop? My head, my
head!—
That woman said 'twas wrong for us to lie,
Even to get a bite to keep us 'live.
She wore black silks all trimmed expensive
like.
Mom said she'd got religion on the brain.
She prayed in all the flats and wa'n't afraid.
She said we needed light. I wonder why?
I never heard no one who talked so queer.
I've got the yellow card she gave to me.
With printing on both sides. I've got it
here.
Perhaps it calls for soup, or something
else.—

I feel so strange! If Tom would only come!
The lights are queer! I wish the rain would stop!
My head! Oh my . . . the lights . . . are going . . . out!
Oh, Tom! . . .

(*She faints. After an interval Tom returns with his pitiful spoil.*)

Tom (*eagerly*).—Come, Maggie, wake! I'm back at last!
Oh, my, she won't wake up. She's dead! She's dead!
Oh, help! my sister's dead!

(*Falls sobbing on his knee beside her body. Crowd. Then after an interval policeman, etc.*)

A Voice.— She's still alive.
She's only fainted. Here, keep back the crowd.
Is there a doctor? Come, don't take on so!
Your sister isn't dead. Don't cry, my lad!

(*To policeman*)

Call up the ambulance. My God, she's thin!

Here, wrap her up in this. Yes, that will do.
Keep quiet, sonny.
POLICEMAN.— Here now, keep away,
This ain't a circus. Give the girl a chance.
No water; she's had all she wants to-night,
It's something stronger that she needs. That's what!

(*The ambulance arrives—To ambulance doctor*)

'Tis nothing special, doctor, but a girl
That's fainted on the street. She's coming to,
But mighty weak and empty seems to me.
But up your way she'll get the proper things.
A square meal more than medicine. That's what.
These alley rats just live from hand to mouth.

(*To boy*)

You come with me to-night.

(*Ambulance drives away, crowd disperses.*)

The Elect.

FRED.—Look at the crowd! Oh, there's the ambulance.
Somebody must be hurt. By gad! what rain!
And so the day is fixed. Well, count on me,
Old man, I'll see you through. What! going now?
Well, if you must. Remember me for sure . . .

(*Leaves dining room together. Later in the evening Dr. Greyville of the—— hospital arrives.*)

FRED (*from the card room*).—Hello, gay juggler with "afflictions sore,"
What grist to-day? A new and rare disease?
Has some queer mortal found a novel scheme
To "shuffle off this mortal coil" for good,
Or suicide disproved your lore of drugs?
GREYVILLE.—There's nothing new. I've had a busy time.
My respite only lasts till twelve o'clock.
Is Allen here? Ah, yes, I've got a tale:

In all that driving rain, a beggar girl
Came in to-night. So thin, she made me creep.
Just like a shriveled hollow reed; a reed
With all the pith dried out. Half dead in fact.
But you don't care. Now don't protest you do.
The girl won't die. Perhaps 'twere better! Well,—
A problem for your philosophic pipe
To draw upon, well mixed with Kidd and Shaw,
And Mill for something old and out of date:
She had, this waif, mere bloodless skin and bone,
Within the pocket of her rain-soaked frock,
Kept there as if a precious, valued thing,
An open sesame to sure relief,
A tract, entitled, well—"The Bread of Life."
No doubt the donor, as the cards were dropped,

Saw treasures ripen where the moth and rust
Corrupt not; for herself, you know! What's that?
Why yes, I'll take a hand. Sniff, hearts or bridge?

PARAPHRASES

UEBER ALLEN GIPFELN IST RUH'

(*After Goethe*)

PEACE, where the sun-glow lingers
On the crest;
Silent the woodland singers
In their nest.
As the zephyr softly dies
A wondrous quiet lies.
Wait, 'tis best;
Thou, too, shalt close thine eyes
Soon, in rest!

ON DRINKING

(*After Anacreon*)

Ἡ γῆ μέλαινα πίνει

THE earth soaks in the boundless main,
The trees drink from the earth;
The sea's refreshed by falling rain
And so adds to its girth;
The sun then gulps the heaving sea,
And, in her turn, the moon
Takes from her liege: So let it be
With me my friends, a boon.
Why quarrel with my primal need
I simply follow Nature's lead?

LA BONNE CHANSON

(*After Verlaine*)

THE whispering boughs,
In the forest dim
Where the moonbeams drowse,
Raise the vesper hymn
In the glinted dark:—
Oh, beloved, hark!

The quiet pool,
'Neath the willow's tress,
In the evening's cool,
Speaks of peacefulness
As the tired winds weep:—
Oh, beloved, sleep!

From the darkening vast
Benedictions fall;
Calm, unsurpassed,
With the night's soft pall,
Mystery its dower:—
'Tis the witching hour.

LA BOURREE

(*After Catulle Mendès*)

SURE the clogs bind the feet,
So off with them! There!
What beauty! How neat!
Ah, I'm fond of them bare.

Let us dance with the link,
In the torches' full glare.
Ah, the feet firm and pink,—
Sure, I'm fond of them bare!

The husbands limp by
Like the curé's gray mare,
But the young men are spry,
And they're fond of them bare.

All decked in their frills
They have come to compare
(Ah, the sight of them thrills
And I'm fond of them bare!)

In the glimmering light,
  Ah, the ankles so fair
('Tis true a brave sight
  And I'm fond of them bare.)

And they know how to choose
  As the soft feet ensnare.
Well,—put on the shoes,
  But I'd rather them bare!

THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR

[*The Wife of Potiphar has been set to music by Carl Linn Seiler, of the University of Pennsylvania.*]

THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR

DRAMATIC EPISODE—IN ONE SCENE

CHARACTERS INVOLVED

POTIPHAR; *an aged Egyptian official of high rank.* (Out of action.)

THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR; *In full bloom of youthful wifehood.*

SARDIS; *an Assyrian, lover to the wife of Potiphar.*

JOSEPH; *chief of the household of* POTIPHAR, *a Hebrew.*

NEFERT; *chief tiring-woman to the wife of* POTIPHAR, *and confidante.*

In scene.—Eunuchs; Tiring-women; Slaves; Snake-charmers; Dancing girls; etc.

Out of scene.—Priests and populace in procession, music, etc.

THE SETTING

(*The apartment of the wife of Potiphar in the compound of the palace, on the main corridor and facing on the large court. Mats, divans and low seats in Egyptian style. At the rise of the curtain two eunuchs guard either side of the door, while two tiring-women assisted by meaner slaves busy themselves preparing the room for the arrival of their mistress from the great ceremonial at the Court of Pharaoh. The snake-charmers ply their trade, and the jugglers and traveling dancers divert the servants, and as the women rearrange the clothes-presses, jewel-caskets, chests for the garments of state, they indulge freely in idle gossip about their mistress, who is returning prematurely from the court, having feigned an illness. There is a soft light from latticed windows through which are heard the sounds of the outer world, while at the sound of the trumpets announcing the approach of the wife of Potiphar, the players and dancers retire hurriedly, being ordered out of the room by a servant.*)

THE SCENE

A SERVANT.—Out with ye, baggage, out, begone! Out, out!
We have our tasks. Out, out, ye baggage, out!
(*To maids:*)
About your work, ye wenches!
(*Then to the retreating players:*)
Out, begone!
(*As the players retire, and the servants resume their work, two maids of the wife of Potiphar enter breathlessly and greet their fellow-servants and start to gossip in a lively, bustling manner.*)
FIRST WOMAN.—We left our lady dallying at the gate.
SECOND WOMAN.—'Tis well we fared ahead; our lady might——
A SERVANT (*interrupting*).—We hear strange rumors——
SECOND WOMAN.—Yea, that Pharaoh's glance
Consumed her quite was seen of all.
The bearer of the wine cups tells the tale.

First Woman.—I had it from the harpist at the door.
None met the royal gaze so fearlessly
And none was there so fair to look upon.
And yet, the gossip runs, with all her gems
In hair, on neck, with girdle thickly sown,
Though all the lords of On wait her caprice,
The wife of Potiphar had other thoughts
That set soft yearning in her liquid eyes
And made her seem a-faint.
Second Woman.—But who, in sooth,
Could hold my lady's favor 'gainst my lord's?
First Woman.—None know, and Khemat says——
Second Woman.—Ah, yes, that fool!
What courtyard clatter sold he thee to-day?
The very stones and halls do tell him things
To startle camel-boys fresh from the wilds.
First Woman.—Out, out upon your shrewish tongue!
Second Woman.—Well, now!
First Woman.—Time was you hung on Khemat's every word.

SECOND WOMAN.—Well, fare ye on. I'll listen with all ears.
FIRST WOMAN.—So—Khemat says that things were all askew,
That while the ceremonies moved in state
My lady sought escape. Lord Sardis watched——
SECOND WOMAN.—Lord Sardis! Pah! I spit when he goes by.
There's evil in his look. The gods my judge!
His eyes are red within from hidden fire,
They glow as blood-stones from his own far East.
Old Mafra says—who once saw Babylon,
As messenger from Pharaoh to the King—
That monstrous deeds are common there, that men
By wizard arts lose shape and human form,
Whilst fearsome animals become as humankind.
FIRST WOMAN.—Old Mafra prattles like a rattling gourd.
If Sardis glared 'tis not so passing strange
My lady took it ill.

SECOND WOMAN.—Yah! Sardis! yah!
I know his ways. An asp among the reeds.
For mind ye, wench, his favor——
FIRST WOMAN (*cautiously*).—Hush thee, friend!
What secret, hidden thing thou wouldst remark
Had better go unsaid; for who are we,
In service to our lord, idly to talk
About our betters?
SECOND WOMAN (*sarcastically*).—Yah, what airs indeed!
Since when has gossip pained thee——?
(*Scurry of feet and bustle outside.*)
FIRST MESSENGER.—Prepare!
Ye chattering maids, set everything to rights.
Our lady's nigh.
(*Retires.*)
SECOND MESSENGER.—See to it all is well!
The wife of Potiphar is at the gate
And all the favored ones of On attend.
The crowds acclaim her. Lo! she steps ashore
Without her consort. Potiphar delays,

By royal call he deals with public needs
And holds him counsel in the temple——
(*Shouts and fanfares in the distance.*)
(*Exit.*)
FIRST WOMAN.—Ah,
Haste thee thyself, we have been long prepared!
SECOND WOMAN.—Prepared indeed! None faithfuller than we!
SECOND MESSENGER (*returning*).—
Curse ye for disputatious jades! But soft,
My lady's in the hall. Prepare! Prepare!
(*Great bustle and confusion as servants, slaves, precede the wife of Potiphar, who enters, attired magnificently, leaning on the arm of Nefert, her chief tiring-woman. As her maids surround her she sinks negligently on the divan, listening to their murmured welcome.*)
WIFE OF POTIPHAR (*to the tiring-women*):
Peace, peace, good folk! And haste ye to your work!
(*Turning to Nefert.*)
Nefert, I faint! These garments bind me sore.

Remove the jewels! How their weights oppress!
This massy circlet cuts my head in twain.
I fain would rest me after these fatigues,
These irksome ceremonies of the court,
Where I must play the puppet part to please,
And keep my lord in favor with the King;
Nor lose this luxury that is my life.

(*Muses, and after a brief interval, to her women:*)

But go ye now, and make ye holiday.
I rest alone. The higher duties call
And I release ye from my service. Go!

(*Claps her hands and all retire save Nefert, who on a signal from her mistress hastens to her side and awaits her will. With more animation her mistress cries out:*)

No prying eyes! My mirror, Nefert, quick!

(*Gazes at herself in various poses for some time, whilst Nefert puts away her jewels. Then as if satisfied exclaims:*)

Much as of old. Ah no, not on the wane,

Not on the wane, but ripe, full ripe——
(*Then quickly, as if putting into execution a fond resolve:*)
To-day!
To-day! I must no longer check desire
Nor hold my burning love in self-made bounds.
Ho, Nefert! 'tis my urgent will
That Joseph—he who came in humble guise,
But now, by grace of Potiphar, is free
And raised to high estate—await me here.
Our household duties need his special care.
Then, to the temple, where the people crowd.
Haste thee! away! No, no, forgetful I——
(*Claps her hand and calls to slave:*)
Attend me here and find the jasper bowl
In which I placed a wreath this early morn
And fetch it me. Quick! quick!
(*Slave disappears and quickly returns with a wreath of white water-lilies or lotuses which she hands to her mistress, who in turn hands them over to Nefert.*)
Ah, Nefert, haste,

Before the goddess place these smiling flowers
Enwreathed for Hathor by these hands alone,
Though born of Nilish mud, sweet as the breeze,
And softly white as wool of Caanan's hills,
Or as the ostrich plumes from land of Punt,
Hang them upon the altar, there await,
And when the auspices are read, return!
A coney crossed my path, a bird fell dead,
The crescent moon last night sank dipt in blood.
Away, and let thy prayers win me peace!
I must find favor in her sight to-day.

(Nefert retires quickly. The wife of Potiphar loosens her girdle, falls back gracefully upon the divan and waits the coming of Joseph with a confident air. Brief silence. The house is still, but afar off the occasional chants and shouts resound which die away to a faint murmur as Joseph's footsteps in the corridor are heard and he appears at the threshold. With inquiring cour-

tesy he halts and awaits the word of his mistress, who waves him in with an easy gesture and addresses him in low, liquid tones:)

Thou hearest afar the distant, broken shouts
Of those who throng the temple gates of Ptah,
That rise and fall as wind among the palms,
Or murmur of the Nile when at the full.

(*Brief silence while the wife of Potiphar negligently rearranges her robe, all the while looking significantly at Joseph, who is frankly puzzled.*)

The fête holds Potiphar, whose duties press
And keep him captive till the set of sun;
Whilst I, a-faint, the privilege of my sex,
Await thee here, knowing thy daily round
Had naught to stay it in the priestly show.
For what, to thee, the mummied Gods of On?
Art thou not servant to a mightier lord?
Nor self art seen, nor offerings from thee grace
The inner shrines. Thou laborest here instead,
Indifferent to the lofty ones they praise.

And yet, methinks, thy spirit at its wont
Is not austere; thy modesty but mask
That hides the passion of a soul unstirred;
Thy comeliness——

(*Joseph, whose embarrassment has been increasing, starts, and despite the effort of his mistress to continue, cries out as follows:*)

JOSEPH.—O mistress, what am I!
Oh, what am I to hear these words? for know,
Humble in self, in household life a slave,
From shepherd stock, familiar to the fields,
No graces mark me. Let me to my work.
I know not palace ways, and, out of place,
As all the man within me cries beware,
I ask, I beg that I may go in peace
To duties waiting——

WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Ah, sweet slave, my love,
List thou to my refrain and hear me out,
Nor lose thy interest through this halting tongue.
For I, whilst nature sulks at noontide heats,
Impatient lie, intent to know thy heart;

To know thee not as slave, but equal mate,
Companion of these all-enticing arms;
The sharer of my too unsated love.
Lo! I, voluptuous by sweet Athor's grace,
Neglected by an aged and foolish lord,
Long, long, have loved thee, sinned in eye and soul
When thou wert near; yea, watched, unknown to thee,
Thy every move, thy working hours, thy rests,
The lift of shoulders in the furrowed field,
The sinuous gleam at play in courtyard pool.

(*Joseph starts again, more and more perturbed, and takes a step toward the wife of Potiphar as if to remonstrate; but her resistless flow of words is not stopped, but gains in passionate intensity as he interrupts her.*)

JOSEPH (*interrupting*).—O mistress, let me serve unseen, unknown,
Unknown, unseen, or I must flee this house!
WIFE OF POTIPHAR (*continuing*).—No, no, my love. Perchance my words seem wild.

But let them be as music to thy soul,
Inviting slumber on my heaving breast.
Oh, let them be thy law, a newer code,
So potent that thy flesh will cry "I yield"
Ere yet thy lips have framed the words "full won."
Be not abashed. Come, tell me of thy god,
That hidden one whose worship fires thine eye
And puts a song upon thy willing lips.
Thy tasks, thy plans, thy hopes I fain would know,
The sweet desires of springtide in thy blood;
For youth doth diadem thy shapely head,
And bursts in beauty on thy darkened cheeks.
Thy chin, decision; e'en thy stature tells
Thy office, and, if countenance belie,
The elder's place, what boots it sith it speaks
Of pulsing health, of vigor—Ah, of love!

(*At this moment Joseph's embarrassment is most obvious. In quick succession, emotional storms, a stern resolve, pity, disdain, endurance and determina-*

tion to hold himself in check sweep over him, and he again advances toward the wife of Potiphar as if to check her; but fails to stop her bold address as in greater excitement she continues:)

Deny me not! No longer I command
As mistress of this lordly house, these lands,
But, clad as dancing girl who plies her trade,
I yield myself ecstatic at thy feet.
Mine equal, more than equal; I, the slave,
Beseech thee. Give me joy, a free return,
A quick response to this my sacrifice.
Entice me with thy lips, thy firstling beard,
For lo! I burn, my love—shame to the winds—
And plead for close embrace of sinewed arms,
Arms dark with sun, strong with the season's toil,
And tell thee, what thou garnerest here is prize
Above all prizes, gift of Maut indeed!
I would be thine, reveal my very self,
Would risk mine all, to lift thee, captive, up
To newer honors, yea, to great delights

Thou hast not dreamed, ineffable.
For race is naught, and rank falls with the belt;
Encouched, thou rulest as the King.

(*Joseph outraged in feeling throws up both hands as if in tragic command, and looking straight at his mistress, who for the moment recoils on the divan, but as if for a spring, says:*)

JOSEPH.—Halt thee, woman; stay thy maddened words!
O wife of Potiphar, what thoughts are thine!
What boldness stirs thy mind! Thou art distraught.
The banquet wine was served o'er-long, o'er-strong.
Calm thee. Forget not who thou wert and art—
The daughter of a royal line, the spouse
Of him who rules a hundred willing slaves.
And I, forget me; let me be as naught,
As one thou wot'st not of, save as thy house
Reflects through duty done his every care.
Have I e'er failed in service unto thee?

Or, niggard, grudging as my office grew,
As step by step, I touched the topmost tread,
O'erlooked the wife in favor of the lord?
Why should I sin against thy caste,
Against this sheltering home and Potiphar,
Against my God, myself and thee?
Oh, check this madness, lest upon its train
Crowds ruin for this house and all within.
I must away about my lord's commands.
WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Ah, not aloof, my love, if but desire
Would fruit, my yield with thee an hundredfold!
Do I not tempt thee?

(Joseph, though realizing his danger, has regained his composure and again advances as if to reason with the wife of Potiphar, and in answer to her question cries as if in religious exaltation:)

JOSEPH (*as if in prayer*).—Tempt me? Hear my vow,
Jehovah, Jireh, God of Abram, hear!
Yea, hear me for my vows still unreleased,
God of the silent reaches, God of light,

Of a long-brooding people, duty bound
The tense devotion of a youth's first oath,
Hold, hold me to it, dull the senses,
Shut out the world as if but seeming——
(*To wife of Potiphar:*) Check!
Oh, check this madness, wife of Potiphar!
Forfend against thyself! Mine eyes are closed,
My ears now full estopped, blind, blind and deaf.
Jehovah, Jireh! He indeed will hear,
Will hearken to my——
WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Art thou granite then,
A being limned upon the templed walls;
Some graven image, squat of trunk, in wood?
No, no, my love, entice! Am I not fair?
No sleek attendant with her gauzy robe
Can e'en compare with these revealed charms.
Many the years ere yet my beauty fades,
And dried as Ramses in the tombs, men pass
Nor turn to see the parchment of these breasts,
The stiffened limbs, the glassy stare of eye.

To-day is certainty, aught else is doubt.
To-day's for love and life; to-morrow, pah!
The body rules to-day, so yield thee, love,
Nor fear, thy path but leads——

(Joseph's composure gives way as he sees the insatiate passion of the wife of Potiphar, and with a look of horror on his face he turns as if to flee, but does not; instead throws his cloak over his head in gesture of despair at his inability to bring his mistress to her senses, crying:)

JOSEPH.—But leads, but leads
To the swift hell of temple votaries
Ishtar and Hathor and the wiles that kill;
Then sated, beastlike to the carrion heaps
Forget when use is o'er!

THE WIFE OF POTIPHAR *(in rage)*.—Great
Set his face!
What, slave, thou spurn'st me then, thou wouldst away?
And this to me, to me, the wife of Potiphar,
Consort and mistress of thy august lord?
Have I been wanton, jested with a fool,
Laid ope my beauty to the thieving air,

Unsealed my charms to dull, unseeing eyes,
Unloosed my girdle that a slave might jeer?
Ah gods, Osiris, judge me in my rage!
Thou shalt not, Jew! thou shalt not thus escape!
Woman and weak, and stricken to the heart,
I'll test thy idle sinew, hold thee fast
Despite thy chaste and miscreated fear,
I'll touch thee limb to limb, and know thy flesh,
Despite thy god will try thy very reins,
And prove his deep protection is a snare.
Closely I'll cling, unrobed, and hair unloosed,
And dare thee to contend!

(Throws herself on Joseph, tearing off her robe and seizing him about the waist. Joseph wrenches himself free, but she holds him loosely by the girdle.)

JOSEPH.—Woman, away!
Though thou indeed art mistress of all here,
And I thy slave, no coward blood is mine,
Nor otherwise unknown the call of flesh.
I strive with sin, not thee; thee would I help

To exorcise this fury that impels
And drives thee to betrayal of thy sex,
That flaunts itself upon thy crimsoned face
And in the wanton carriage tells thy shame
Before thy gods and mine——
WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Thou pratest thus?
Still adamant and chill as sunless shrines
Thou wouldst away in unconcealed disdain?
(*Savagely*).—So be it then, but know thou still art mine,
I'll have thy badge of office, strip thee clean,
Expose thy villainy to all the house
And hold thy life at my accusing word.
(*Tenderly and distractedly*).—Ah no, what say I? Stay! Still naught but scorn?
Then, wretch, away, lest anger strike thee dead!
What say I? Ptah! I faint with growing rage!

(*Joseph tears himself away, leaving his girdle in her hand, and flees rapidly down the corridor. For a moment of speechless rage the wife of Potiphar is silent, then bursts forth:*)

Speech chokes! alone! alone! scorned by a slave!
Revenge! alone! forsworn! Osiris, help!
Scorned by a stripling, scorned and left afire,
My passion at its flood-tide, flouted, scorned!
Scorned by a slave without a slave's fierce lusts,
Scorned by a slave who knew not servile use!
And I, the helpmate of a gibbering dolt
Who dangles at the temple making vows,
Whilst I in very heyday of my bloom
Meet insult where I fain would quench desire.

(Falls weeping in hysteric rage upon the couch. Then silence. Then resumes:)

Unhappy me, unhappy in my quest!
Shall I live loveless, though the many haunt
My steps and oft in bold presumption force
Attention for the favor of an hour,
And find myself bereft, forsaken of all,

Except my pampered oldlings, Sardis, Mnft?
But, oh, ye gods! their barbered beauty palls,
Perfumed, familiar to the finger tips.

(*The fierce desire returns. She rises up, crouching upon the mats and clutches the girdle fondly.*)

I'd play the tigress, seek a ruthless mate;
Be desert lioness in blaze of sun!

(*Muses; then breaks out:*)

His badge of office! Is there rest in rage!
Shall I wreak vengeance on the helpless cloth,
Who cannot hold the master in this leash?
No! no! Ah, goddess, Hathor, be not deaf;
Nor blind to what thy altars bear from me!
Give me the Jew. Youth fresh of heart and limb!
In vain! in vain! naught but the telltale scarf!

(*Again sinks despairingly, but as footsteps are heard in the corridor, believing it Potiphar, she quickly rearranges her disordered robe in part, keeps the scarf in hand and cries out for revenge, expecting to be overheard:*)

Ye faithful, loved and looser deities,
Be with me and avenge me for this wrong,
Dark desecration of the hearth and home
The sanctuary of Lord Potiphar!
Shall I the wife bear insult from a slave,
That dareth, as vermin, when the sun is gone,
To scurry forth and lift a loathsome head,
To equal those the gods have set on high,
To bandy words and seek with coarse——

(*Sardis suddenly enters and the wife of Potiphar, terrified, hides the scarf and cries out:*)

Ah, gods!

SARDIS (*savagely and implacable*).—Thou well mayest cry! Thou thought'st me far away,
Fled'st me at the court and fail'd'st me—
Woman, speak!
Thou wert not at the temple. Speak, I say!
Thou wert not at the temple. Speak!

WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—

(*Still not in full control of her senses, but desperately endeavoring to gain time and recover her wits:*)

What, thou?

Not Potiphar? But thou? I rave, I dream.
I failed thee at the temple? True, my love,
Thy sudden entry agitates my soul.
But hear me: Lo! an illness overcame,
And here at rest I waited thy return,
Knowing full well by that rich love that's thine
Thou wouldst not tarry, but to my relief.
Heardest thou my ravings? Ah, believe them not;
I slept and woke in terror of a dream.
A midday madness held me, and I raved
With all my wits in sudden, hideous rout.
What said I, love? Come, lie in soft embrace.
Thou heardest me then? I seem to thee distraught?
'Tis true; but, worn of soul awaiting thee,
Delay did prey upon my troubled mind,
And sharp desire of thee did in my sleep
So fitful take a strange and vagrant form.
No, no, my love! I burned alone for thee.

(*Holding out her arms in order to overcome the suspicions of Sardis, the girdle of Joseph is revealed.*)

SARDIS (*sarcastically repeating her words*).—
Alone for me! Alone for me! And this?
(*Pointing derisively at scarf, and then sardonically as if in the humor of it all:*)
Ha! Ha! I see it all! I see it all!
Thou wert not at the temple. True. Ah, true!
But here thou kept'st the tryst. And this! And this!
A tender token of his love, his scarf.
Ha! Ha! alone for me! alone for me!
Thou baggage! this soft snare shall damn thee quite!
'Tis witness of the cattle thou wouldst lift
From out the mire to mingle with th' elect?
For this thou fail'd'st me. Oh, ye gods of ill!
Betrayed, betrayed like Potiphar. His scarf!
WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—The scarf! the scarf! Oh, hear me, Sardis! I——
(*Frantically*).—The scarf! Yea, yea,—I know,—the scarf—'tis mine!
A household weaving. Yea, the truth, the truth.
I swear it, Sardis. Harden not thy heart.

The truth, by Isis, but the truth! for thee
I waited; thee alone, the house——
(Sardis advances in black anger as if to strike her, as his suspicion grows.)
SARDIS.—A murrain on thy lying tongue; a plague
Upon thee, dost thou think that I, that I——
By Ptah! Why wait to parley? why delay?
Thy guilt, O froward heart—thy guilt
Outflames in face! Am I so humbly born
That thou cans't spurn me as a river slave
Or field hand stabling with his master's beasts?
Shall Babylon play second at thy gate
And take the favors that a menial leaves?
By Bel and Marduk! woman, thou——
WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Ah, gods!
I'll tell thee all. Revenge me, love, revenge!
The Jew—stole in—the house—was echoless—
I here,—alone—awaiting thee—the truth—
And I, Osiris judge, was taken—by force,
Against my outraged will was forced to hear
The craven insults of an unripe mind.

Fear gave me strength. The thought of thee made bold.
I tore myself from out his impious clasp,—he fled—
And fleeing, coward-wise, I seized the scarf
As witness of this wrong—to show it thee
And let it win redress—a quick revenge
Against this upstart, vile, presumptuous Jew.

(*Sardis listens, unbelievingly.*)

Thou hearest me not! That look! Ah, be not cruel!
My love, my love, entice! All, all for thee!
Believe me, on the shrine of Ptah I swear
Not false! not false! True——

SARDIS (*snarling, seizes the scarf*).—G'rr! thou liest! True?
Then black is white. Here, wear thy badge fore'er,
And let the tomb depict thy history;
Case-gilded for the final burial rites.
In scarlet let thy wantonness appear!
(*Savagely*).—Thou wert not at the temple. That is truth.

Nor e'er shall be. The truth, by Ptah!
Betray!
Betray me now, thou witch of Memphis!

(*Sardis takes the scarf he has seized and quickly throws it round her neck in a loose noose which he surely tightens.*)

WIFE OF POTIPHAR.—Help!
O Sardis, stay thy hand! Ho, Nefert, help!
The scarf! It chokes! Ah, Sardis—hold thy wrath!
My love of loves—Have mercy! Oh, I choke—
A dream—an evil dream—naught else—the truth.
O love—I gasp—Is this—the clasp—of love?
Osiris, save me—Oh, I die—of love.
Osiris judge!—of love—of——

(*Falls back dead at the feet of Sardis, who spurns the body with his foot and hastily leaves as the songs of those returning from the temple are heard on the highway. Ominous pause, and then Nefert hurrying in through a private doorway, is seen in terror carrying the*

wreath, mysteriously brown and sere. With horror-stricken countenance at the inauspiciousness of the omen she cries out:)

NEFERT.—O wife of Potiphar, the wreath—

(*Then discovering the dead body, with a piercing shriek she exclaims:*)

Fulfilled!

(*And drops in a faint beside her dead mistress. The wreath falls on the body of the wife of Potiphar.*)

(QUICK CURTAIN.)

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